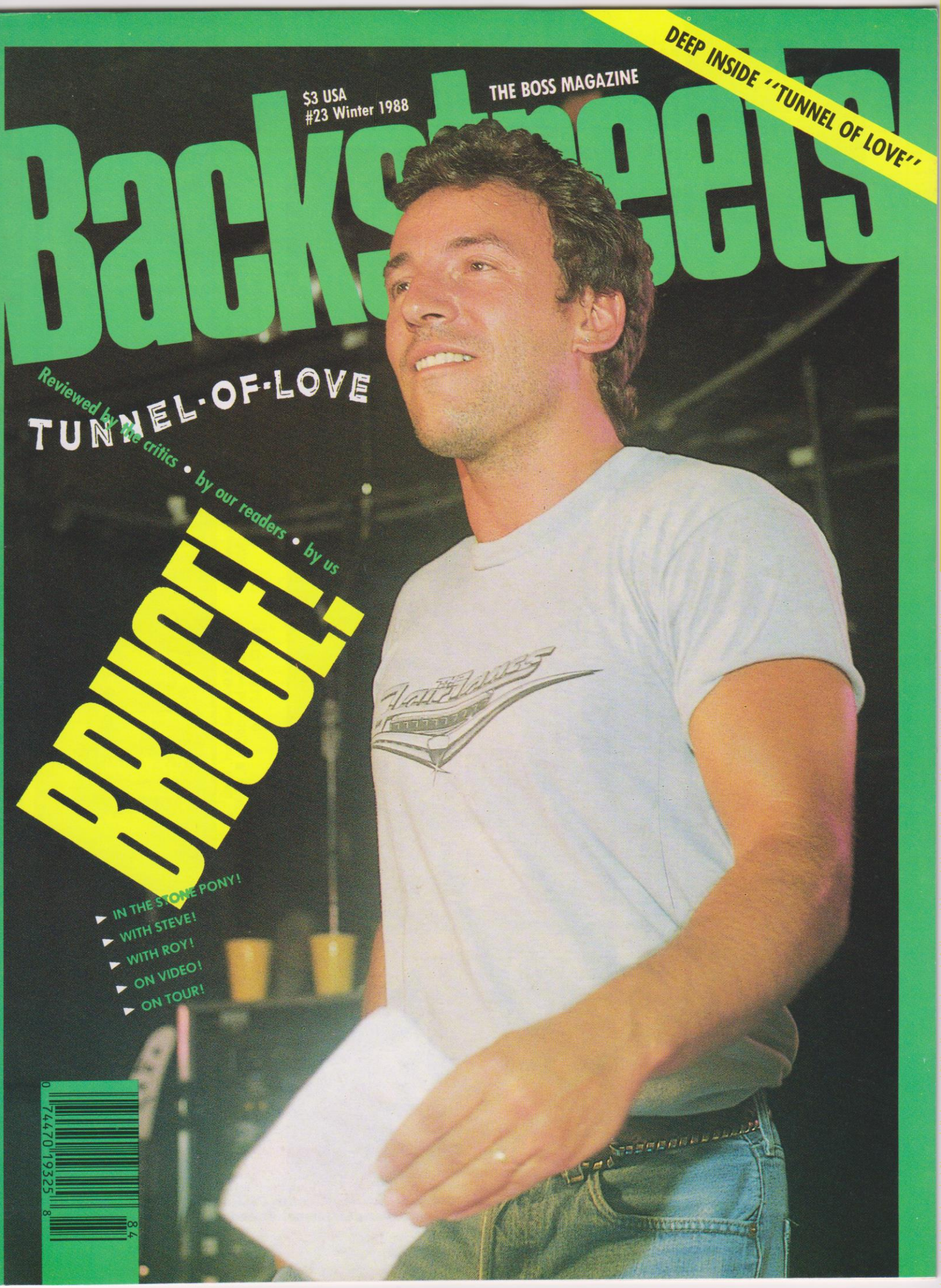
DEEP INSIDE "TUNNEL OF LOVE"
Backstreets
$3 USA
#23 Winter 1988
THE BOSS MAGAZINE
TUNNEL·OF·LOVE
Reviewed by the critics • by our readers • by us
BRUCE!
IN THE STONE PONY!
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Backstreets

A BOSS MAGAZINE

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Editor:
Charles R. Cross

Associate Editors:
Erik Flannigan
Mary Schuh

Contributing Editors:
Robert Santelli
Wendi Dunlap

Contributors:
Steve Reed, Wendy King, Stu Reid, Kathie Maniaci, Barbara Cohen, Arlen Schumer, Jim Ragsdale, Ruth Atherley, Marcello Villella, Wayne King, Jesse Reyes, Jimmy Guterman, Allen Schery, Mark Stricherz, Kathleen Gammon, Bob Zimmerman, Grant Alden, Amy Dawes, Michael McCambridge, Tracy Reed, Steve Smollen, Steve Bumball, Billy Smith, Debra L. Rothenberg, James Shive, Rex Rystedt, Gary Desmond, Dan Benson, Michael Dougan, Robert Allen, and many others, all over the world, whose help has been essential.

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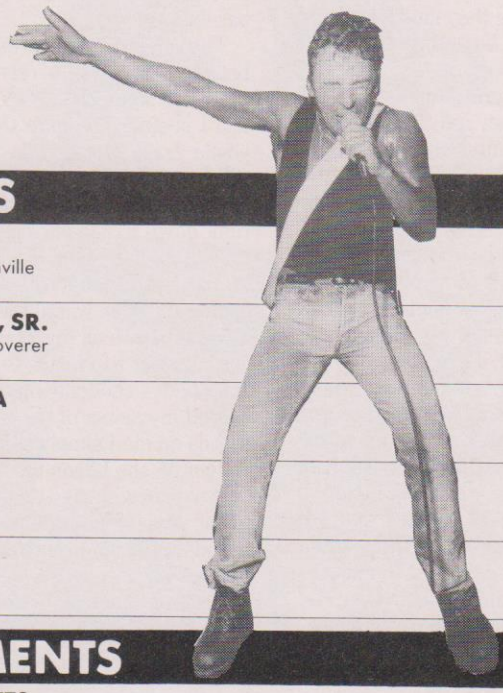

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COVER

BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN
STONE PONY, 8/21/87
Photo by Debra L. Rothenberg
Design by Jesse Reyes

On the backstreets

In the past six months I've had the occasion to lose two of my closer friends. Don't get the wrong idea — it's not like they died or anything. It was more like they faded away, or that I let them fade away; but suffice to say my friendship with them is over.

It's early autumn as I write this and it's the sort of season that makes me think back to twelve years ago when I first entered college on a day not unlike this one. Back then the world seemed full of never-ending opportunities, a place of mystery and possibility, and I think a lot of that had to do with the many new friends I was meeting. I still remember the first day I rolled into town, checked into my dorm room and befriended this obese Hawaiian guy who lived across the hall. He and I went out that night, bought Buckhorn Beer with fake I.D. and hung around on the Ave. He seemed like a reasonable enough guy though his musical tastes were more in the Elton John and Kiki Dee camp. Later that week I met the gang of guys who became my real buddies and we started doing things like going to Springsteen shows together, smoking dope and listening to Ramones records. I remember seeing the Hawaiian guy around campus and not really knowing what to say to him — we had little to share beyond that one night.

After college most of my close friends ended up moving away — they followed their careers to cities like Boston or Chicago, pursuing things far more important than our comradeship. At first there were ten of us but the number shrunk slowly until now I'm the only remaining Seattle resident — I haunt the pinball arcades these days as a solitary figure. The three of our gang who were the closest have remained close throughout the years — we use super saver airfares to get together at least once each year. Together we immediately revert back to our adolescent ways, which usually entails getting shitfaced drunk and doing something as inane as switching political yard signs (in our moonlight raids, we'd exchange Democratic signs for Republican ones, and vise versa, cackling like hyenas the whole time).

In light of the number of people I'd call close friends back in college, it seems particularly strange that recently I'd choose to leave behind two of my post-college friends. One of the situations is relatively simple to understand, especially if you've seen Ray Milland in *The Lost Weekend* — this guy is a serious alcoholic. He's taken our one night a month habit of drunken male bonding and turned it into a daily ritual. They say all alcoholics end up trashing everything — and everyone — they care about, and that was the case here. The friendship ended back where it began, at a concert, but rather than sharing in a mutual revelation this time around it was my drunken friend being propped up by me while he puked and bled on my shoulder. When it got to the point of him slapping me in the face I walked away and didn't look back. To be honest, I'd have to say our relationship began to unravel a couple of years back — when I got married and he declared I had sold out in the process. To him that meant I cared more about my wife than baseball.

The other friend represented a deeper hurt because ours was a relationship that at one point had so much energy and vision to it: She and I seemed to share the same view of this whole crazy world. Like Springsteen said in "Bobby Jean," "we liked the same music, we had the same clothes," and for us it was true right down to a leather jacket that fit either of us like a glove. She'd had it signed by Andy Warhol, and though the signature was as old and weary as he was at the time, I loved it and I loved her with all my heart.

It all went bad faster than I ever could have imagined — suddenly this person that I thought shared my sense of the world was placing demands on me I simply couldn't meet. And disappointed she began to trash me to everyone else we knew. I have these traditional views of honor and commitment, particularly to my friends. Sticking to those views meant leaving her behind.

Perhaps other people will find this strange, but in both of these relationships Bruce Springsteen played a unifying role. Both my two ex-friends and I looked at Bruce as someone who had started out as fucked-up as we were, and ended up making his way out. We had all three come from shit-filled towns that had tried to break us. To us Springsteen represented a shining example of someone who had stood up for what he believed in, and, eventually, found redemption in doing so. All three of us had been joined initially by our vision of ourselves as rebels and it seems so strange to imagine us now, universes apart.

I guess all this really came to a head for me listening to *Tunnel of Love* for the first time. Because for me, somewhere in the melancholy melodies of songs like "One Step Up, Two Steps Back," is the refrain I've been hearing in my head ever since these relationships ended. And more significant yet, *Tunnel of Love* represented the first Springsteen album in seven years I hadn't experienced with these two friends at my side. It's not that I feel friendless or anything — it's just that without them the world seems less than complete, as if everything were not in order.

After listening to the album for the first time I went home with my wife and didn't feel much like talking. I'm the sort of moody person who acts like that occasionally and one reason I love her is her patience for that. She went to bed and I stayed up late in the office, looking through old books and thinking of years gone by. I picked up a photo album and found the one picture I had of my two ex-friends and I, together at a Springsteen show. I was always better friends with each of them than they were with each other, but here at one time, we were together. In the picture my drunk friend is in the middle and kicking his legs straight in the air in Springsteen-fueled ecstasy. She and I are holding him up and we're so close to each other in the picture we're touching in ways normally reserved for the way fathers and mothers hold new babies in their arms.

The picture never was properly fixed and the three years since it was taken have exacted their toll. It is brown, muddled and faded in the corners so that we would be hardly recognizable to someone who didn't know us. Looking at it now, it seems like a time so far away I can't even imagine having lived it.

* * *

On to business. To tell whether your subscription is up or not, simply check the mailing label of your current issue. If that label starts with a number "X23" then this is the last issue of your current subscription and to continue uninterrupted service you must renew now. Any subscriber, at any point in time, can easily renew their subscription: $12 will add another year in the US and Canada, while $20 will add two years to your subscription in the US and Canada.

Also on the subject of subscriptions, if you're one of the readers who are still buying *Backstreets* on the newsstand, you're missing one of the most important services we offer — that is the Boss Hotline. But we only give out the number to *Backstreets* subscribers, so subscribe today and we'll send it to you.

One other note: anyone who wants to aid the magazine by handing out our brochures at either upcoming concerts, or leaving them in record stores, please drop us a line. Especially on the upcoming tour we'll need some help so any assistance you can offer will be greatly appreciated.

As it's close to Christmas again, can we suggest a gift subscription to *Backstreets* for all your Bruce buddies? It's the gift that will keep giving all year long. You'll find a coupon in this issue.

Many of you have asked if the SuperSub program is still available. Though we have more SuperSubs than we ever expected, any US subscriber who wants to convert to a SuperSub still can through the early part of next year. It's pricey — $50 a year — but the benefits are still great including *Backstreets* sent first class as are all Backstreets Records catalogs, plus the tremendous *Backstreets* Staff T-shirt. For more complete details look to page 35 in this issue.

No Surrender.

— Charles R. Cross

Off the wall

Our gorgeous back cover photo for Off the Wall this time was shot by noted New York photographer Karen Kuehn. Kuehn is a friend of the Big Man's in addition to being a talented photographer and the result is an intimate and insightful portrait. Kuehn works for *Elle* and several other New York-based fashion magazines. This photograph was taken earlier this year at Kuehn's studio in New York.

On lips

The video to "Brilliant Disguise" premiered on MTV October 28th and is one of Bruce Springsteen's most unusual videos. Directed by Meiert Avis (who also directed the video to U2's "With or Without You"), it was shot in early October at a sound stage in New Jersey. An elaborate set was constructed to resemble Springsteen's kitchen. Shot in black and white, the video features one long camera shot that slowly zooms in on Springsteen's face. He sings looking straight at the camera until the zoom is so close he must turn away. Perhaps the most unusual aspect is the vocals: rather than lip sync, as he had previously in all his videos (to disasterous results in "Born in the USA"), Springsteen chose to cut an entirely new live vocal for the video. The overall effect is stunning — a "non video" video that captures his passion towards the song. It's a courageous step and a move by a major artist that we hope will lead others to make more creative videos that challenge the medium, rather than drive it to its dull extremes.

BIG NEWS: If you wonder where Clarence Clemons is on the new LP, there's a rather simple answer — Clarence has been busy with his own recording projects, working on his third solo LP. The release date is unclear — much depending on the Bruce tour — but Clarence says he hopes to put more push behind this upcoming disc including a major tour on his own. Clarence is also doing more and more work on his singing and he already reports that the new material represents another step ahead for him as a vocalist. . . .Nils has been touring the East Coast while not working with the E Streeters. . . .A new punk band out of Canada calls themselves The Nils. Their latest disc on Rock Hotel/Profile was produced by Chris Spedding. . . .Roy Bittan recently produced an album by the Swedish group, The Monroes, and both he and Clarence contribute backing tracks to the disc. Roy even played briefly with the band on a Swedish TV show this last summer. . . .Both Roy and Clarence back up The Pointer Sisters on their version of "Santa Claus" on the Jimmy Iovine Xmas LP. . . .

PARTY TIME: Steve Van Zandt finally has his "No More Parties" released as a single here in the US with a video getting some rotation on MTV (featuring *Backstreets* photographer Kathia Maniaci no less). The video was filmed early in the summer at the Stone Pony. MTV also has videos of Steve's for "Native American" and "Bitter Fruit" but doesn't seem too interested in airing either — Steve has been suggesting a write-in campaign both to MTV and all the radio stations who are ignoring his record. We'd suggest that *Backstreets* readers get on the bus and do something. . . .Van Zandt has been touring the East Coast with the reformed Disciples of Soul and playing many small clubs — don't miss one of his shows — in addition to his opening stint for some of the U2 shows. . . .

DEBRA L. ROTHENBERG PHOTO

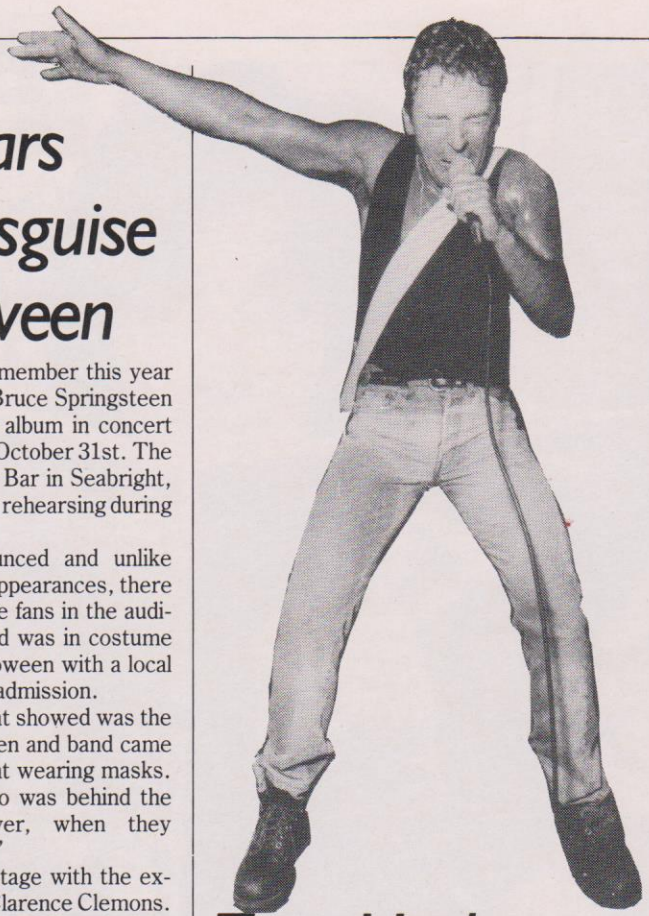
Glen Burtnick reading his favorite Boss magazine.

MONDO VIDEO: On the video/movie front, make sure you see the film "Hail, Hail Rock 'n' Roll" which features a hilarious interview with Bruce about the time he and the E Streeters backed up Chuck Berry. The film, a tribute to Berry's 60th birthday, is one of the better rock films of the genre, with humor and insight to go along with the usual concert footage. . .U2 should, by the time you read this, have released their documentary of their recent US tour. Footage from the show where they pulled Springsteen on stage is scheduled to be included. . . .A new play titled "Tracers" features both "Born in the USA" and "Shut Out the Light." The story is a *Platoon*-like saga about a group of soldiers in Vietnam, originally written by vets in a workshop. The story goes from boot camp through their tour of duty up to the early '80s. The current director, John DiFusco, tells us Springsteen donated the songs for free because "he liked the play and wanted to do something for us." . . .Bruce contributed a song to an upcoming album honoring Woody Guthrie. . . .One of our readers swears he saw Alan Thicke on "Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous" singing "Man at the Top" on a Carribean cruise ship. Sounds like something out of the "Twilight Zone" to us but he says he saw it. . . .

DON'T WALK AWAY: Southside Johnny and the Jukes have been less than visible lately, only playing a few selected shows on the East Coast. Southside has also been stepping out on his own lately playing bass with other bands in New York City clubs. At one recent show at the Garden State Arts Center Southside opened up the Jukes show with an acoustic version of "Fade Away." . . . Little Steven fans will want to pick up the album by Sweden's Jonas Fjeld Band titled *Neck 'n' Neck*. Steve wrote, played and produced one track. . . .Danny "Phantom" Federici got married in September to Kathlynn Heimeid in Janesville, Wisconsin. Most of the band was there, and Bruce was the best man. During the service Roy played organ while Nils sang the Kenny Loggins' songs "Be My Valentine" and "Meet Me Halfway." Our best wishes to the new couple. . . .Bruce impersonator Sammy Atlantic was recently quoted in the *LA Times* as saying "I do everything in my show that Bruce does. If Bruce got sick one night or lost his voice and they gave me a call I could do the show for him." Excuse us as we puke in the corner. . . .A much more honorable tribute to Springsteen are the "Springsteen Awards for Outstanding Community Service" held this last September in Oakland, California. Sponsored by the Alameda County Food Bank, the awards honor those in the community who have worked to fight hunger. . . .A recent Springsteen Day in Holland drew over 400 fans for a party for Boss fans. Out of the event came a newsletter for Holland fans — for info write The Boss, Sperweiborst 52, 2317 ZM Leiden, Holland. . . .

In the news

Bruce wears brilliant disguise for Halloween



DEBRA L. ROTHENBERG PHOTO

It was a Halloween to remember this year on the Jersey Shore as Bruce Springsteen chose to debut his new album in concert minutes before midnight on October 31st. The setting was the Rumrunner Bar in Seabright, NJ, where the band had been rehearsing during October.

The show was unannounced and unlike Springsteen's recent Pony appearances, there were only a handful of Bruce fans in the audience. The rest of the crowd was in costume expecting to celebrate Halloween with a local band. They had paid $3 for admission.

But the only local band that showed was the E Street Band as Springsteen and band came on stage just before midnight wearing masks. It wasn't hard to know who was behind the brilliant disguises, however, when they launched into "Stand on It."

The entire band was on stage with the exception of Nils Lofgren and Clarence Clemons. At one point in the show a member of the audience asked "Where's the Big Man?" Springsteen responded by saying "He's in California, but he'll be back."

Second up was "Glory Days," followed by the Creedence song "Bad Moon Rising," then "Around and Around," and Bruce's current fave song, "Light of Day" (surely to be included in the upcoming tour we figure).

The first part of the set was as one would expect from a Springsteen Shore show, but next was something the crowd was unprepared for — a slow, almost acoustic version of "Born to Run." In this context it sounded like an entirely new song and rather than bursting with revelation, it simmered in loneliness, much like the demo outtake of "Thunder Road" done acoustically. Bruce followed it up with "Fortunate Son."

Next came the moment everyone had been waiting for — "We're gonna do a new one" Bruce said as the band launched into "Brilliant Disguise." It was a slightly more rocking version than that on the LP as Springsteen played electric guitar throughout and the drums were more upfront than the album mix.

After that song the band seemed unsure of themselves and huddled like football players. Springsteen joked into the microphone, "that's the debut, let's try another" and out next was "Tougher than the Rest." They followed that with another huddle and then "Two Faces" was played.

That was all the material to be heard off the new record as the band closed out the night with "Lucille" and "Twist and Shout." During the final numbers the band was joined on stage by Tim McClune, a long-time Shore musician owner of the club, who played keyboards.

Tour Update:

At our press time, news of the *Tunnel of Love* tour had been unconfirmed. Rumors abounded both of a tour in December and of one later in the spring. All subscribers can stay tuned to our subscriber-only Boss Hotline for more breaking information.

In October it was announced that Bruce would play at Carnegie Hall on December 7th at a benefit for the Harry Chapin Foundation. Pat Benatar, Bob Dylan and several others were also slated to appear. The Chapin Foundation said in advance Springsteen would only be playing one song and that a Chapin composition but obviously he may play more. Tickets sold out quickly, despite ticket prices ranging from $25 to $1000 a head. The announcement only added to growing speculation of an impending tour.

Springsteen and the E Street Band spent the latter part of October rehearsing the new material at a bar in New Jersey. Those hearing the rehearsals described them as rocking with the new material sounding even more powerful live.

Rumors concerning the tour have been many, including suggestions the band would start with a series of shows in Philly and the Meadowlands with a full scale tour to follow at the first of the year. Obviously tickets could — and may — go on sale tomorrow and sell out allowing Springsteen and crew to quickly announce a show and play soon thereafter. Though actual dates and venues are still up in the air as of our press time, we think a tour will almost certainly happen, the only question being when.

THE BACKSTREETS JUKEBOX

1. **Bruce Springsteen**
Tunnel of Love
CD (CBS)

2. **Bruce Springsteen**
The Live Collection
CD (CBS/Sony) Japan

3. **Little Steven**
Men Without Women
LP (EMI) Japan

4. **REM**
Document
CD (IRS)

5. **Hank Williams**
Lovesick Blues
LP (Polydor)

6. **Dave Alvin**
Romeo's Escape
CD (Epic)

7. **Rosanne Cash**
Kings' Record Store
LP (CBS)

8. **The Jukes**
The Jukes Live at the Bottom Line
LP (Epic) Promo

9. **Little Steven**
"No More Parties"
12" (Manhattan)

10. **U2**
October
CD (Island)

Ten monster discs, from no particular time period, with no particular connection except that you should play each and every one of them TODAY!

On record

'Tunnel of Love' Bruce's first full digital LP

Tunnel of Love came out a week later than originally expected but it still made a bang and represents the quickest record Bruce Springsteen has ever issued after another release (there were only 10 months between *Live* and *Tunnel*). The record was released simultaneously worldwide on LP, cassette and CD, and is one of the best sounding fully digitally recorded rock records yet — the CD sounds fabulous.

"Brilliant Disguise" came out a month earlier and was released in the US, Canada, the UK, Australia, Japan, Holland, Spain and South Africa among others. There were no picture sleeve differences apart from the usual Japanese pressing with usual graphics and writing. In all countries the 45 features the non-LP B-side "Lucky Man." An early US misprint did say "Brilliant Disguise" was "not on the *Tunnel of Love* album."

The US issued promo posters of the album cover and a promo packet that included 12 different pieces with stand-ups, banners and header cards. Both the UK and Japan were planning to release some kind of CD single to promote the disc. Apart from posters, promotional material was rather limited.

Japan had planned to issue a special box to include the LP, cassette and CD versions of the album but delayed and possibly abandoned that plan. Japan did issue both an LP and CD version of a five-track sampler off of *Live*, titled *Live Collection Two: Born to Run*. It features the five LP tracks recorded from the Giants Stadium shows off of *Live*. Both CD and LP formats feature a strip of beautiful adhesive Bruce stickers. The CD joins the earlier *Live Collection* (which features the only CD versions of "Incident on 57th Street" and "For You") as two of the nicest collectibles from *Live*.

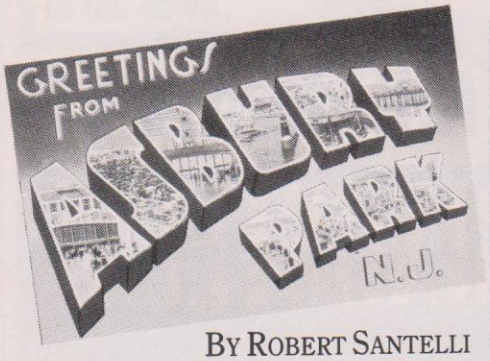
On the CD front, Southside fans will be glad to know that *I Don't Want to Go Home* has been issued by Epic as a midline (less than $10) CD and it sounds great. Springsteen archivists will want to get the CD of Jimmy Iovine's compilation *A Very Special Christmas* which includes the only CD release of Springsteen's "Merry Christmas Baby." A CD collection is now out that includes Donna Summer's version of "Protection."

Steven fans will be glad to note that "No More Parties" was finally released in the US — the first single off his new LP in the US ("Trail of..." was planned but was never officially issued as far as we can tell). The song features the B-side of "Vote," and there is a 12-inch version out in both the US and overseas. The 45 also was issued in Holland and the UK and did very well in Holland, Steven's strongest market. Like us, you may be shocked to know that EMI has indeed rereleased Steven's first two LPs but with two songs left off both discs — EMI still hasn't explained why to us but it's nothing less than criminal.

Above: The UK 12-inch to "Brilliant Disguise" uses a different color red and includes a poster; right, Little Steven's "No More Parties" US 12-inch; lower right, the Japanese CD and LP "Live Collection II: Born to Run," a gorgeous package complete with Bruce adhesive stickers, unique live shots and more.

A bizarre new release from Italy by a band called the Rocking Chairs, on an LP titled *New Egypt*, features a version of Springsteen's outtake "Restless Nights." The version (perhaps learned off bootlegs) sounds exactly like Springsteen's. It is on the label River Nile and is distributed by EMI. Two new collections feature Bruce songs — *The Power of Classic Rock*, an album by the London Symphony Orchestra, features their version of "Dancing in the Dark" and "Born in the USA" while an Australian collection called *Long Hit Summer* includes Bruce's "Cover Me." The London Philharmonic does Bruce Springsteen?

Glen Burtnick's excellent new LP *Heroes and Zeros* was issued on CD and has been something of a commercial success. The first 45 from the LP was in Billboard's Top 40 in early October and rising.



By Robert Santelli

*(*Greetings From Asbury Park *is a regular column on the Jersey Shore scene by Robert Santelli. Santelli is a noted Jersey writer who worked with Max Weinberg on the classic* The Big Beat. *His latest book is "The Jersey Shore: A Travel and Pleasure Guide" published by East Woods Press.)*

It was a different kind of excitement which surrounded the sudden release of Bruce Springsteen's latest album, *Tunnel of Love,* here on the Jersey Shore. Unlike last year's *Live* set which generated all kinds of hoopla — long lines at area record stores, record release parties, a grand celebration at the Asbury Park Rock 'n' Roll Museum, and loads of media attention — the anticipation and eagerness which *Tunnel of Love* created could only be described as somewhat restrained and reserved.

Was there a lack of interest in the Boss's backyard? Hardly. Numerous record stores at the Shore reported first day sell-outs of the album, and Springsteen's new songs filled area airwaves. "This time around I think everyone sort of kept their senses," said one local Springsteen fan. "It wasn't necessary to act like a young kid at Christmas and go nuts."

In any case, the popular acclaim for *Tunnel of Love* by Shore Springsteen fans was practically complete. Many longtime followers of Springsteen — and there are lots of them here on the Shore — praised the lyrical content of the album above all else.

Perhaps this local reaction to the album reflects the record's more mature themes about love and the sacrifices that go with it, and what a life-long commitment to a man or woman really means.

"*Tunnel of Love* is the kind of record that you want to keep inside you," said another Springsteen fan. "It's a record you really listen to rather than simply get up and dance to. And sometimes those kinds of records are the ones that mean the most to you in the long run." How true.

An incident occurred here in Jersey this fall that could have smeared mud all over the state's music scene and even torn it to pieces. It had to do with two non-profit musicians' organizations, Jersey Artists for Mankind (J.A.M.) and the New Jersey Rock Alliance. A problem arose when both groups announced plans for an end-of-the-year awards show to raise money for charity and honor deserving New Jersey artists. Both J.A.M. and the Rock Alliance, however, claimed as their own the names Jersey Arts and Music Awards and "Jammies," the actual award to be presented. The Rock Alliance said it had announced its show first and possessed a registered New Jersey service mark for Jersey Arts and Music Awards and therefore was entitled to use both names.

ANGEL KAMES PHOTO

Max Weinberg playing with Levon Helm at the Stone Pony.

Some stones were cast and names were called, and the situation really heated up when the Rock Alliance followed through with its threats of legal action. J.A.M. was served papers to appear in court because of a suit filed by the Rock Alliance.

But rather than spend thousands of dollars defending its claim to "Jammies" and Jersey Arts and Music Awards, J.A.M. decided not to go to court to settle the issue. It retracted its claim to the names, and that ended the legal battle before it really began. The move enabled the Rock Alliance to take undisputed possession of both Jersey Arts and Music Awards and "Jammies," while J.A.M. was left to search for new names for its awards and awards show.

"The whole concept behind J.A.M. is to raise money for needy people in New Jersey," said J.A.M. spokesman Lee Mrowicki. "We have no plans to waste money on court proceedings when that money could be used to buy food for hungry kids. The less money J.A.M. spends, the more that's available for charity."

It was a noble position to take, and in the eyes of most Shore musicians, the right one. The Rock Alliance was determined to obtain legal ownership of the names. Said Rock Alliance spokesperson Doug Wain, "We have to protect our rights to the use of 'Jammies' and Jersey Arts and Music Awards."

Worse still for J.A.M., the conflict with the Rock Alliance caused the group to postpone its awards show indefinitely. It was originally scheduled for October 13 at the Paramount Theater in Asbury Park. Said Mrowicki: "We simply couldn't go ahead with all the uncertainty in front of us. With the artists we wanted to honor and the live television coverage that has been discussed, we couldn't continue without all this being cleaned up first."

According to Mrowicki, J.A.M. intends to work on revised plans for its awards show after plans for its first annual Christmas show are completed. "We'll have our awards show, and it'll raise money for charity, and honor those artists we feel deserve to be honored. It's just not going to happen this year," he said.

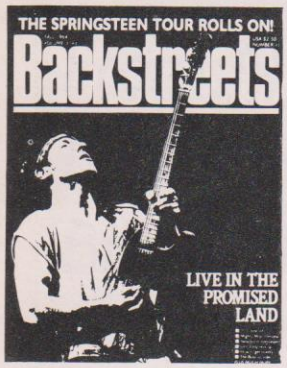
As for the Rock Alliance's award show, the *New York Daily News* reported that it would occur on November 12, but no location was mentioned. Calls put in to Rock Alliance spokesperson Doug Wain were not answered.

E Street Band drummer Max Weinberg has been performing with Levon Helm's All-Stars lately. The outfit performed twice at the Stone Pony in the past couple of months. Onstage the two drummers complemented each other in particularly fine fashion. "Max is one of the top drummers I know," said Helm, who once was an integral member of the Band. "His style is very schooled, yet he can kick the drums around. He's a wise player. My style is looser. When the two of us play, it's like playin' catch. I'll hold down homeplate and he'll do some fancy footwork. Then he'll do the same for me, and I'll step out a little."

"For me to play with Levon is a thrill and an honor," Weinberg said. "This is definitely something I always wanted to do. I think we sound real good together. What we have is a hard driving blues band."

The Green Parrot, a Shore rock club located in Neptune, just a few short miles from Asbury Park, has done much in recent months to create a bond between the Shore music scene and the one which exists further north in Hoboken, New Jersey. For years it was rare that a Hoboken band would come and play a Shore club. And with the notable exception of Springsteen shooting his "Glory Days" video at Maxwell's, Hoboken's version of the Stone Pony, few Shore outfits ventured to Hoboken to perform.

But because the Green Parrot has actively courted Hoboken bands and fan response has been good, Hoboken bands like the Cucumbers now have a popular support base here. What's left to do is for Hoboken to reciprocate and put the welcome mat out for Shore bands.



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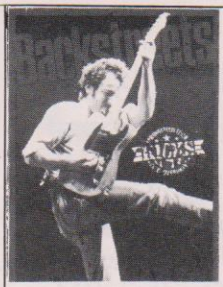

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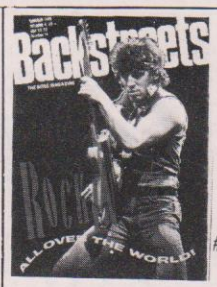

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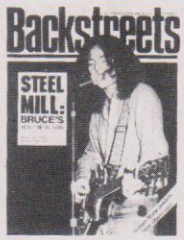

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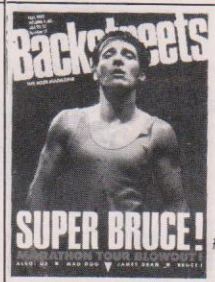

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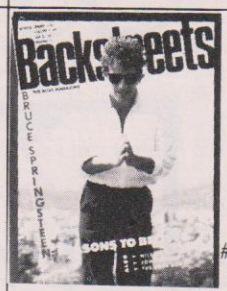

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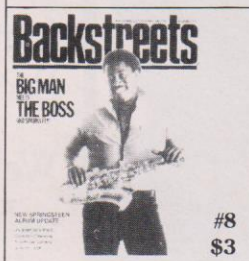

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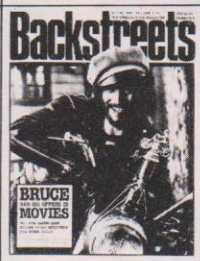

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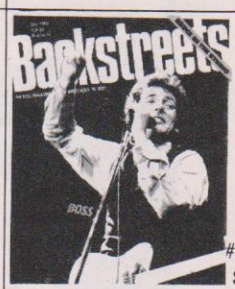

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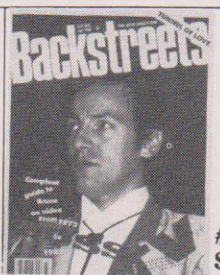

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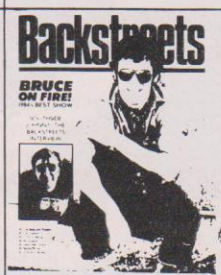

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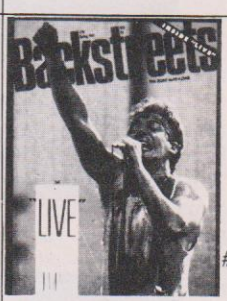

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In interview

From NJ to Nashville with Billy Chinnock

BY ROBERT SANTELLI

Backstage at the Exit Inn in downtown Nashville, Billy Chinnock and band are working over a set list as if it were a strategy for the Super Bowl. Songs are placed and re-placed. Which one should open the set? Which one should close it?

It's a big deal because Capitol Records is in town for a special showcase of Chinnock's new songs. The record company has gotten hold of Chinnock's latest demo, liked what it heard, and forked over some money so Chinnock could put this thing together.

The show goes well, and although no deal is offered, Capitol goes away impressed. Afterwards, Chinnock wonders what's next. "I guess I'm impatient. I wish I could have an answer tonight, right now, but maybe at this time, no news is good news," he says.

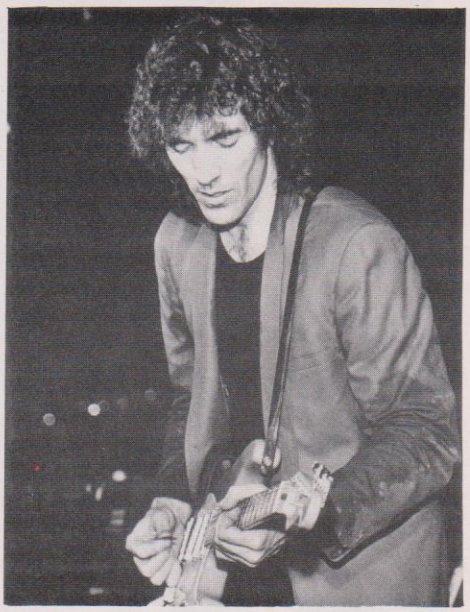
It's been a long road that Billy Chinnock has traveled. His career began on the Jersey Shore in the mid-60s, but he left for Maine just before Springsteen's *Born to Run* made Asbury Park a rock 'n' roll hotspot. After Maine it was back to Jersey, and then onto Nashville. He's recorded five albums, two of them self-financed (*Live at the Loft* and *Dime Store Heroes*) and two released on major labels (*Badlands*/Atlantic and *Learning to Survive in the Modern Age*/CBS Associated), while another was released on Leon Russell's now-defunct Paradise Records (*Rock 'n' Roll Cowboy*). Along the way he picked up an Emmy for his song, "Somewhere in the Night."

But real commercial and critical success has eluded Chinnock. Friends of his, however, say that his newest material is indeed his best. Many of them feel his best shot at stardom is with his latest batch of songs.

Backstreets had a chance to talk with Chinnock in Nashville about his career. Here's what he had to say:

Backstreets: *When you first moved to Nashville, you were quite involved with country-rock.* Rock 'n' Roll Cowboys *was the result of that. Then came* Learning to Survive in the Modern Age, *which hinted strongly at a more techno-rock direction. Are you still exploring ideas which were first presented on that record?*

Chinnock: I guess the new music is a kind of combination of all the stuff we bashed about in Jersey and all the hi-tech stuff I got into in the last four or five years. The music sort of looks back and forward at the same time. *Modern Age* was a transitional record. I love the songs,



DEBRA L. ROTHENBERG PHOTO

but it wasn't an ultimate statement by any means. I look at the album as one on the way to something else. I feel the stuff that I'm writing with the Synth Axe is really new stuff. It's going to open up all sorts of possibilities, and that's exciting. I'm doing something that's fresh. I hope to emerge with something that's different than what I've done in the past and what everyone else has done thus far.

Backstreets: *Can you briefly explain the concept behind the Synth Axe?*

Chinnock: It's a computerized instrument in the shape of a guitar. You even play it like a guitar and keyboards. You can make it sound like everything from a classic rock 'n' roll guitar to a wailing saxophone, to a symphony. It's that amazing. It has endless possibilities. You can play a thousand things at a time, or you can play one thing.

Backstreets: *How did you get involved with the instrument?*

Chinnock: I've always played keyboards as well as guitar. And when synthesizers came on the market, I was interested in them at once. When I came to Nashville, I bought a Kurzweil, a digitally controlled keyboard instrument. That led to more computerized instruments and more experimentation. The companies then started to send me things. When the Synth Axe people sent me one of their instruments, I fell in love with it. And I've been playing it ever since. It's not a guitar as some people think. I don't use it as a guitar replacement, either. I still play my '56 Stratocaster. It's just a brand new instrument with endless possibilities.

Backstreets: *Recently, Nashville has shed its traditional "cowtown" image, what with bands like Jason and the Scorchers, Royal Court of China and artists like Steve Earle coming out of the city. You've spent some four years in Nashville. But now I understand you're thinking of heading for the West Coast.*

Chinnock: Nashville is like the Woodstock of the South. There are a lot of musicians in town — rock and country. It's a great place to live and there are plenty of things happening here right now. But all my work with my new equipment has led me to a new phase and a new direction of writing which is best suited for L.A. or San Francisco. Plus, my manager is out of California, and there's more work for composers like me who are very interested in getting into soundtrack work. So, I might be headed for California soon, you're right.

Backstreets: *The songs you just played for me reminded me a lot of what Peter Gabriel and also Don Henley are doing. Yet, somehow you've retained your Jersey R&B roots and your ability to write songs with street-smart lyrics.*

Chinnock: That's great to hear that my material reminds you of what Peter Gabriel is doing. I think he's great. Songs like "Sledgehammer" just blow me away. Hopefully, I can embody my experiences living in places like Maine and Nashville and Asbury Park into real contemporary stuff with soul like Gabriel has done.

Backstreets: *You're back playing with drummer Tony Smith and bass player John Kay.*

Chinnock: These two guys have been with me a long time, something like eight years, on and off. Tony, of course has played with everyone from Mahavishnu John McLaughlin, to Jan Hammer, to Jeff Beck and David Sanborn. John has played with Cyndi Lauper and David Bowie. So they're real experienced, and they're really into the material I'm writing these days.

Backstreets: *I heard a rumor that you've been asked to join the Doobie Brothers, now that they've solidified plans to re-form. Is that true?*

Chinnock: Well, it's presently under discussion. It's possible. I don't know what else I can say about it at the moment.

Backstreets: *One of your new songs, "Out on the Borderline," deals with your days on the Jersey Shore.*

Chinnock: Yeah, it's a pretty special song. It's pretty personal, and it looks back at the old days. It deals with all of us who turned to rock 'n' roll as a way out, as a way to better our situations.

Backstreets: *Let's talk for a moment about your Jersey Shore roots.*

Chinnock: Well, I had a number of bands back in the early days, before Upstage and all that. Guys like Danny Federici, Garry Tallent, Vini Lopez, and David Sancious all played in bands with me before they joined up with Bruce. One of my first bands — the Downtown Tangiers Bank — was one of the first to make a record and tour outside the Shore. I jammed at the Upstage like everyone else. I even helped paint the place. But there was a down side to all that, because all the running around and late nights and lousy food led me to get sick. I got hepatitis and nearly died. I was out of commission for a year, and when I finally got healthy, my band had dissolved. It was an altogether different scene that I walked back into.

Backstreets: *You've been playing music for at least 20 years now, maybe 25. There were a few times when stardom seemed within reach. You've always been known as a regional artist. And now, after all this time, you seem to be attempting to step out onto the national scene.*

Chinnock: Well, I think it's about time I did, don't you? (Laughs)

On stage

With Steven!

At the Ritz in Manhattan the evening of Thursday, October 8, 1987, Bruce Springsteen joined Little Steven and the Disciples of Soul for a two-song, 20-minute encore. First, Bruce and Steve traded vocals on "Native American," their duet from Little Steven's last album, *Freedom — No Compromise*. Then they laid down an incendiary version of "Sun City," the Van Zandt composition which was a 1985 single by Artists United Against Apartheid.

Bruce's appearance, three days after the release of his ninth album, *Tunnel of Love*, followed a solid two-hour show by Little Steven and his band. Steve concentrated on tracks from his last album, and he was in fine form and eccentric dress, and interacted easily with the crowd. A highlight for me was his rousing rant against Ollie North's "patriotism" before launching into "I Am a Patriot."

Steve opened the first encore with a talk about the bent of his latest work. "Some people say to me, 'I like this political stuff and all, but why don't you write love songs any more?'" Steve explained, "It's a hell of a lot easier to solve all of the world's problems than to make a woman happy." He then lead the band through "Men Without Women," following with "Out of the Darkness."

On the whole the crowd, which I'd roughly number at 1,000, was fully familiar with Steven's material, singing along with most of the lyrics. A banner unfurled from the balcony read: "Radio — Play Little Steven!"

Then around 1 a.m., the Disciples hit the stage for the second and final encore, followed by Steve and Bruce, arm in arm. This was easily the closest I have been to Bruce in a concert setting. Bruce wore a faded red sweatshirt with a slight rip on the right shoulder and black pants. He was grinning broadly as the band dove into "Native Americans." Steve and Bruce traded vocals, staying pretty much true to the album version. The crowd joined in on the "I am Native American" chorus, during which Bruce briefly revived his "Dancing in the Dark" steps.

From this, they moved on to "Sun City," with a take nearly as thrilling as the record. On the verses, Steve sang the first two lines, while Bruce closed with the final two.

During the ending of "Sun City," Bruce got loose, dancing a bit and screaming away. In fact, he even slipped into "I — live in America" for a minute.

The song closed, and the crowd was as nuts as stunned people can be. The Disciples, Steve and Bruce lined up and bowed. Bruce shook the hand of each member of the band, put his arm back around Steve, and together they walked off stage. I left numb, fighting a fear that if I let the night end and went home to bed, I'd somehow forget what I had just witnessed. I needn't have worried.

—Tim Dabareiner

BOSS BAR-BUSTING

DEBRA L. ROTHENBERG PHOTO

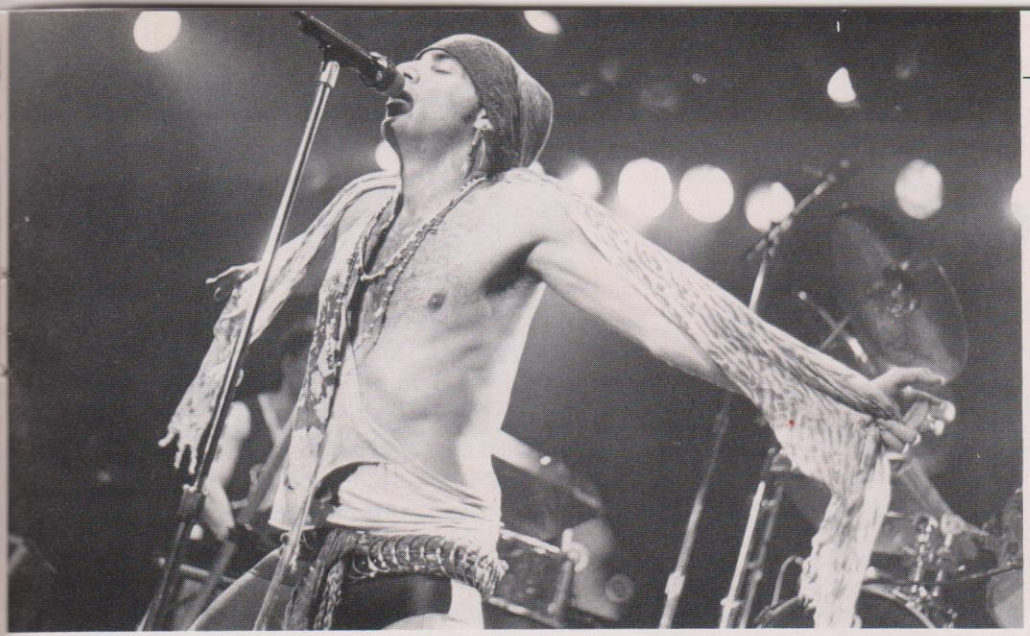
With U2!

It was the ideal combination of today's top rock stars: Bruce Springsteen and Bono fronting the band U2. The setting was, appropriately enough, JFK Stadium in Philadelphia, where the earlier Live Aid show had failed to unite the two by satellite despite pre-show rumors otherwise. But finally, on September 25th, it happened.

Bono and the band had trotted back on stage for their second encore after an unusually long time off stage. They were playfully chatting with themselves and Bono took the mic to say "Is there anybody out there who would like to join the band and play guitar on this song?" It didn't sound so strange considering that Bono has on this tour frequently pulled an audience member on stage to have them play on various songs. But this time around he repeated the question, even though hundreds of fans were already crushing towards the stage offering to play. "Do you think Bruce Springsteen would like to join me and play my guitar?" was Bono's next question and with that Springsteen came on from the left side of the stage with his own guitar already strapped on. He was greeted with the loudest response I've ever heard since seeing Bruce at the No Nukes show in 1979.

Bono then asked the crowd, "What is he, a local boy or something?" and with that they launched into "Stand by Me." Springsteen and Bono shared vocals and unlike Springsteen's previous performance at the Rock 'n' Roll Hall of Fame Awards earlier this year, he remembered all the words to the song. After the song, both Bruce and the band left the stage but the audience cheered for another encore for a good ten minutes more.

—Dave Boyle



KATHIE MANIACI PHOTO

With Roy Orbison!

You had to rub your eyes while you watched the band on stage at the Cocoanut Grove Wednesday night, Sept. 30 in Los Angeles.

For one thing, standing out front under a smoke-choked spotlight was Roy Orbison, in dark glasses and a black buckskin jacket, singing songs from a place in rock 'n' roll heaven the way a man should no longer be able to sing at 51 — with operatic power, and eerie, resonant swoops into the dark, crumbled corners of a true lover's heart.

And he did it with an effortlessness that made you wonder if you were dreaming.

But it was the lineup of other musicians on-stage that really made you wonder — because the guy sitting behind Orbison, playing acoustic guitar and reading sheet music from a stand, was Bruce Springsteen.

And behind Springsteen, also on guitar, was Elvis Costello, looking slender and pale with his hair standing straight up, and glasses that matched Roy's.

And over on the other side of the stage, his head bobbing and weaving over the piano keys as if he were lost in some boozy bliss, wearing scuffed shoes with silver tips and a green silk shirt, was Tom Waits.

The rhythm section, including James Burton on guitar, had been Elvis Presley's.

And the backup singers — the group delivering classic Orbison lines like "dum-dum-dum-dum-be-do-wa" in ultra-smooth harmony — were k.d. lang, Jackson Browne, Bonnie Raitt, Jennifer Warnes, J.D. Souther and Stephen Soles.

For one lucky night, that was the band at the Cocoanut Grove, an old showroom at the mid-town Ambassador Hotel in Los Angeles, hours before a 6.1 earthquake would rumble through the city to jolt apart the dreams of those who'd been there.

The concert was being filmed to air on the Cinemax cable channel in January. It will be the ninth in a series of acclaimed Cinemax Sessions conceived by the HBO offshoot to bring great figures of pop music together with those they've influenced. (Past sessions have focused on B.B. King, Chet Atkins and Fats Domino, among others.)

Springsteen's participation in the Orbison session was kept secret from all but a few of the 300 or so guests who managed to squeeze past aggressive security to get a seat.

Though it should have been obvious — Springsteen made a speech at Orbison's induction into the Rock 'n' Roll Hall of Fame, simultaneously supplying liner notes for Orbison's new greatest hits collection — hardly anyone knew for sure until the Boss was spotted hanging out in the wings just before showtime, and the rumors that had been flying all day were confirmed.

Bruce took the stares and whispers in stride, hanging out in plain view in the backstage doorway along with Costello, Raitt, Browne and actor Harry Dean Stanton, even amiably signing an autograph for a fan's "brother" ("Sure it's for your brother," he laughed). He looked great — smooth-faced and young, in a dark suit and Western tie.

After comedian Harry Anderson warmed up the audience — pleading with them (somewhat in vain) to get loose and not act like a record industry crowd — the musicians filed out, most of them carrying sheet music. No one but Orbison was introduced.

Bruce had a seat closest to Orbison but still in the background, and his acoustic guitar was one of three, along with Burton's electric and Jerry Scheff's bass, being played (Orbison and Costello were also playing woods).

The first two songs "Only the Lonely" and particularly "Leah," painted a gloomy mood, and with the long breaks tied to the filming (during which Bruce stayed on stage and just sat there quietly looking around) things got off to a pretty unspectacular start for Boss fans. Bruce had joined in on some vocals, but had kept them pretty low, leaving the spotlight to Orbison.

With the others giving Orbison the same amount of room, it looked like it might be a one-man show after all.

It was a series of screw-ups that broke the ice. Anderson, still acting as m.c., said Orbison was going to debut a song called "Comedians" that he and Costello had written together. He said, "This is a new song, and Roy's afraid he's going to forget the words."

Sure enough, Orbison blanked after the first verse (Cut!), and looked behind him, laughing, to where Costello sat, taking it all too seriously.

The next time he made it through the words (and dark words they are), but the camera had run out of film.

The third take something else went wrong, so later in the show they did the song again, but by that time, the musicians had forgotten their awe.

When Orbison sang "In Dreams" (the song that helped revive his career when it was used in the movie *Blue Velvet*), Bruce was joining in vigorously, and by the time Orbison did "Uptown," it was Bruce's jaunty guitar-picking that was making things pop, and when he joined Orbison at the mike to sing "It won't be long, baby, wait and see/I'll have a big car, fine clothes and then I'll be/Uptown" he was twitching his shoulders and shaking his hips. The music began to rock.

Things got way better. It was the rockers that really made the show — "Mean Woman Blues," "Claudette," "Ooby Dooby," and of course, "Pretty Woman," when Bruce and the other guys joined Orbison at the front of the stage for a long, joyous finale with instrumental solos traded off during the bridge among various hotshots.

Some of the ballads were great too — "Blue Bayou," "It's Over," — but on "Cryin'" it was just too frustrating not to see k.d. lang and Orbison duet (as they did on a recent new recording). Through the night, there were really no vocal spotlights allotted anyone but Orbison.

Tom Waits showed up late — very late — and drunk, and contributed some very good piano playing. (Bruce, who'd been offered his own dressing room but turned it down, reportedly said to Waits behind closed doors, "Get your face in place.") Costello, that night, proved himself a fabulous harmonica player.

Later, writing in the *L.A. Times*, longtime Springsteen champion Robert Hillburn described it as "easily the hottest invitation-only pop event of the year in Los Angeles." That 'easily' belonged to Bruce.

In his speech on Orbison's behalf on the awards day, Springsteen recalled, "In 1970, I rode for 15 hours in the back of a U-Haul truck to open for Roy Orbison at the Nashville Music Fair. It was a summer night and I was 20 years old and he came out in dark glasses, a dark suit and he played some dark music.

"When I went into the studio to make *Born to Run*," he said, "Most of all I wanted to sing like Roy Orbison."

Summer was over and it was a lot less than 15 hours and a bumpy ride from Bruce's Palos Verdes mansion to the Ambassador Hotel. But the rock superstar didn't have to come. The 20-year-old kid did.

—Amy Dawes

John Hammond, Sr.: Forever Young

BY GRANT ALDEN

John Hammond has been a name in small print on the back of record jackets for nearly 50 years. *Backstreets* readers will remember Hammond as the man with the good sense to sign Bruce Springsteen to his first CBS contract, but that's almost a footnote to the career of a very special man.

Born to the wealth of the Vanderbilt and Sloane families, Hammond's musical education began with classical violin, accompanying his mother's piano in drawing room concerts. Forays to forbidden vaudeville shows led to evenings drinking lemonade and listening to jazz in Harlem speakeasies. Hammond listened to jazz long before it became an acceptable white intellectual art and was a large part of its commercial and artistic growth.

His signature has been a mark of quality and taste on jazz, classical and rock records for most of the history of the art form. Hammond was noted for simple, spare productions and was fond of mixing unfamiliar players together to achieve new sounds. During his long career he signed and produced artists who became legends — Benny Goodman, Count Basie, Billie Holiday, Aretha Franklin, Bob Dylan, and, of course, Bruce Springsteen.

Hammond was also a long-time member of the NAACP board. He was the first man to present and promote integrated jazz bands. He produced Broadway shows, wrote jazz criticism, and worked to integrate the Army during World War Two.

John Hammond was 58 when Mike Appel brought Springsteen to his office. Hammond remembered that meeting in his 1977 autobiography, *Hammond on Record*. "[Springsteen] launched into an extraordinary piece filled with street imagery. I heard immediately that he was both a born poet and an extremely good guitar player. I kept a lid on my excitement; I didn't want Appel to see how impressed I was. I asked Bruce if he had anything really far out.

"'Yeah,' he said, 'If I was a Priest,' It was a song about the Virgin Mary running a whorehouse in the Old West and Jesus as a customer. I had never heard such a song in my life....

"Now I thought I'd best get a few songs taped. I booked the small Columbia studio the following day and told Appel I wanted to be left alone with Bruce for the duration of the session....

"In less than two hours that day Bruce recorded 14 songs, every one of them better than anything he later recorded in his albums — in my opinion — because he was, and is, at his best by himself, playing guitar, playing piano, and singing. On the recording sheet, a log the company requires for all studio auditions, I wrote 'the greatest talent of the decade' or some such understatement."

Hammond would go anywhere and listen to anyone. He explained this, writing about his discovery of Charlie Christian, the legendary guitar player credited with making the electric guitar rock, who he found 30 years before Springsteen:

"As with every other great musician I have 'discovered,' there was never a moment's doubt. I could hear the singularity of the sound. Always this quality seems so obvious. Lights flash. Rockets go off. Where is everybody? Why don't they hear it? This has always amazed me. Holiday sounds, Basie sounds, Wilson, Stacy, Hampton sounds — they issued forth as if waiting for me to hear them. I know part of it has been my enthusiasm for black musicians; I go anywhere to hear them, and to be sure, I've never seen anyone from the white record industry there ahead of me. But Benny isn't black, and as for Basie and Wilson, all anyone had to do to 'discover' them was sit on his butt and listen to the radio."

In the mid-seventies, PBS produced an hour documentary on Hammond and his illustrious career. Not surprisingly, it also represents a first of sorts — the first official Bruce Springsteen live in concert video (a killer version of "Thundercrack"). The special — which never aired in the US — also featured a memorable interview with Springsteen. Bruce is seen wearing a Jimmy Walker-styled knit ski cap, an undershirt and has more evidence of acne than any public picture of him before or after.

"He was this magic guy," Springsteen told the interviewer. "He's not like other people. It's the way he carries himself — he's got this aura 10 feet outside his body. You see him with ten other people and he's all you see.

"He'd always be playing something I'd walk in his office and he'd have something on. He'd say 'listen to these guys.' He seemed to operate all the time on this incredible energy level. And the music he was into was so broad. He'd listen to me and then he'd go in and play me something from the '30s or '40s. That was what always amazed me about him — he was always so alive."

John Hammond will be missed.

NEWS FLASH: Late in October at a memorial service for Hammond in New York City's St. Peter's Church, Bruce Springsteen played an acoustic version of Bob Dylan's "Forever Young," dedicating the tune to his late friend.

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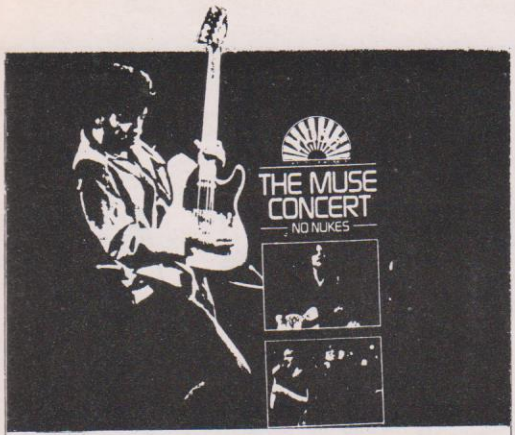

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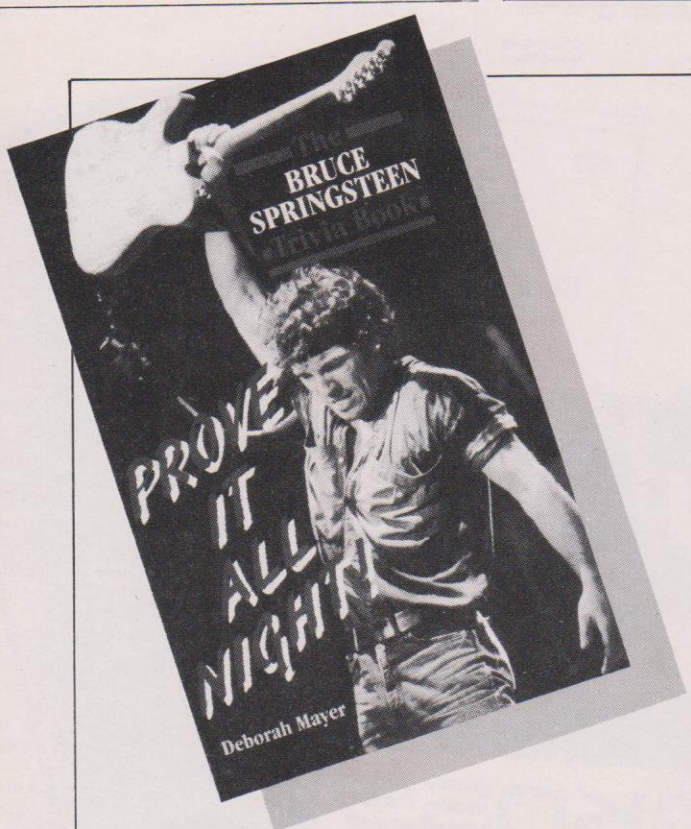

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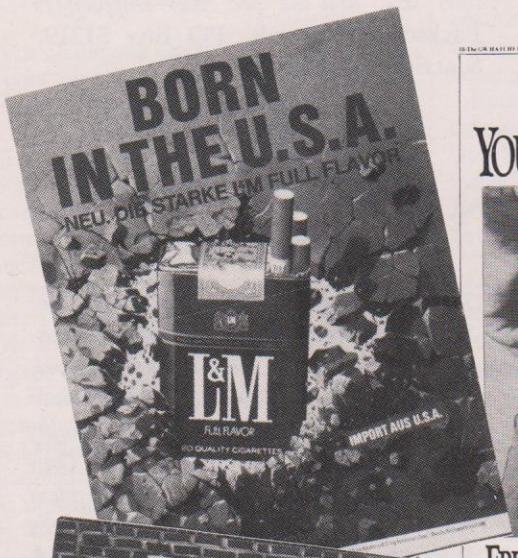

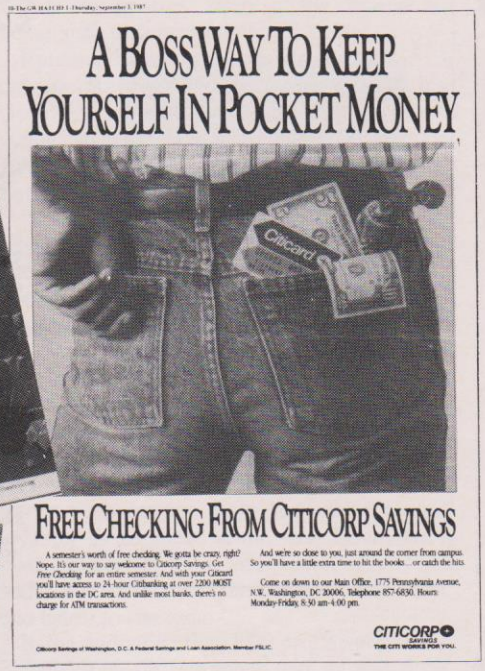
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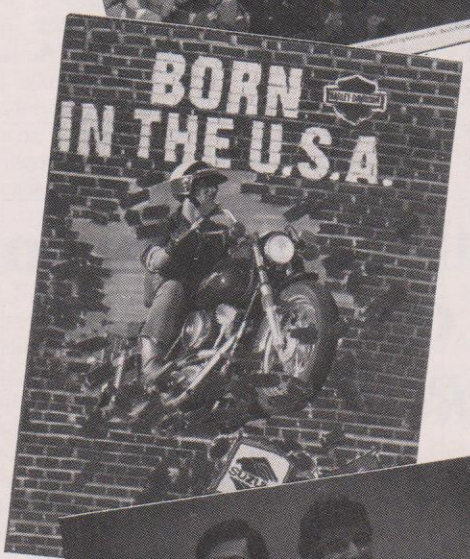

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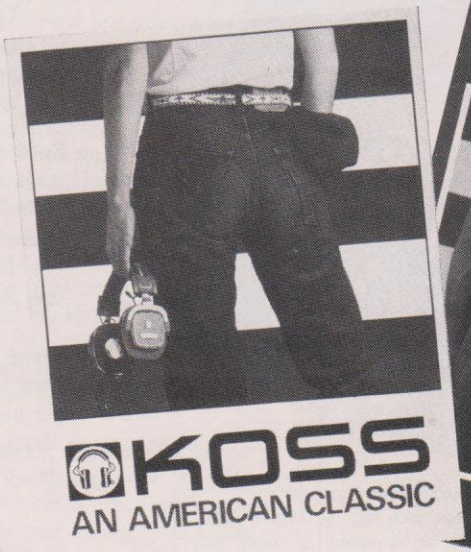
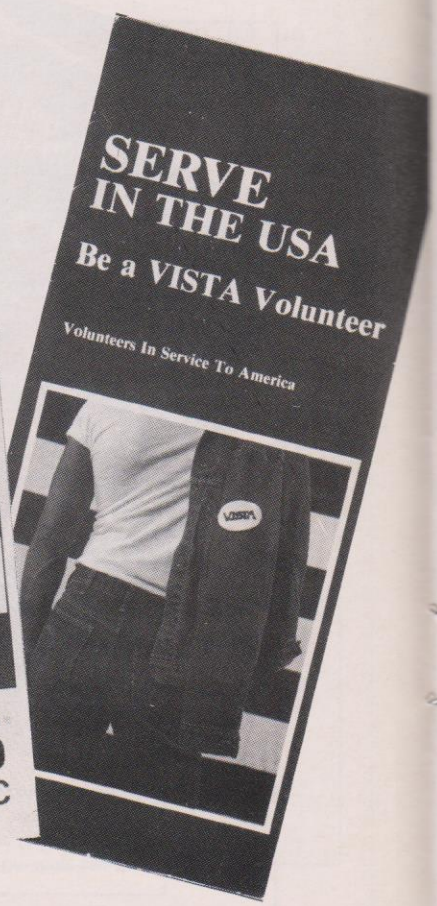
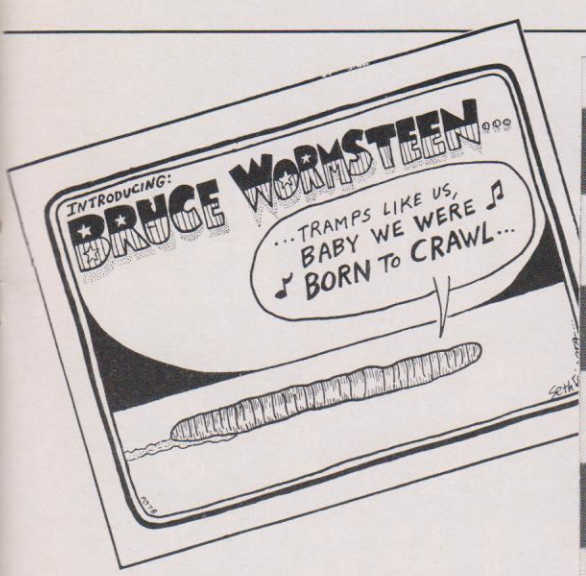
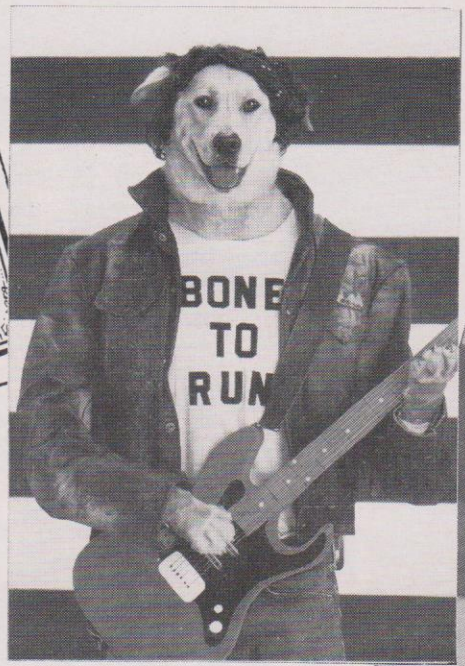




A couple of issues back we asked readers to watch for examples of rip-offs of the imagery of *Born in the USA*. We'd heard and seen all the disgusting TV rip-offs — Chrysler's sick "Born in America" sung by Kenny Rogers and Miller's ill "Born and bred in the USA." Our readers deluged us with other print examples, some from foreign countries, and we've reproduced the best of them here. Thanks to Jerald Smoliak, Grace Treadman, Ron and Diana Skocypec, Julie Baile, Mimi Chamberlain, Kim Berglund, Bertha Maddot, Katherine Young, Christian Bruns and all the other subscribers who sent examples in.





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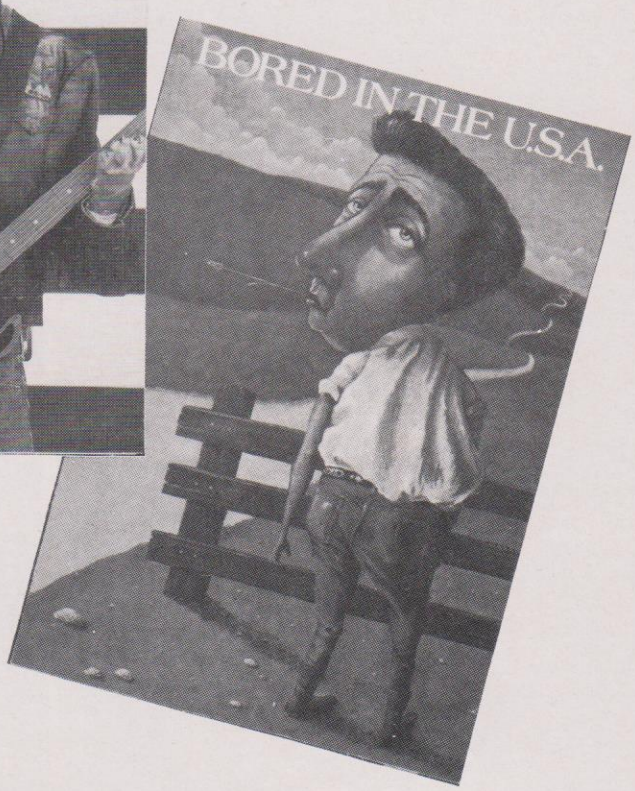

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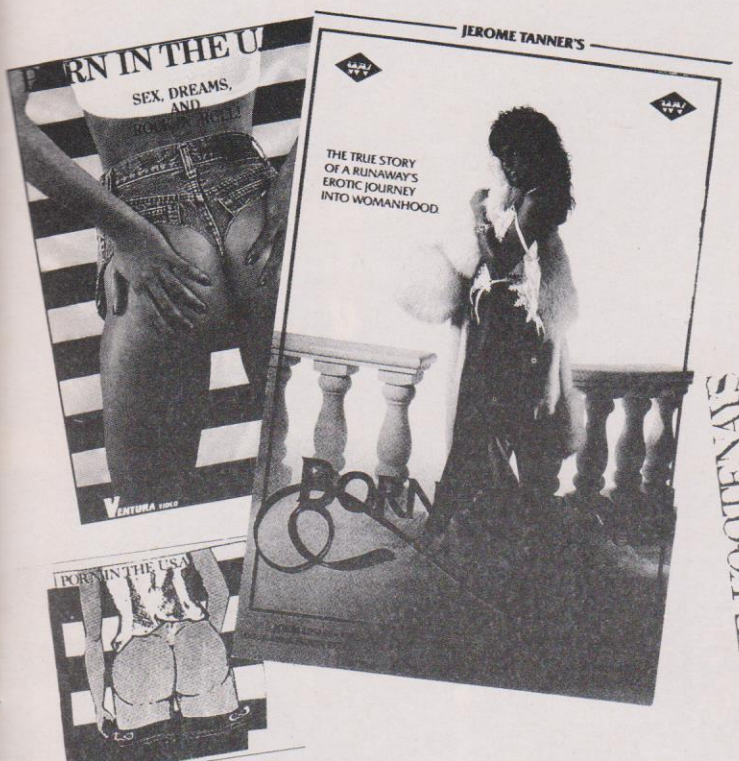

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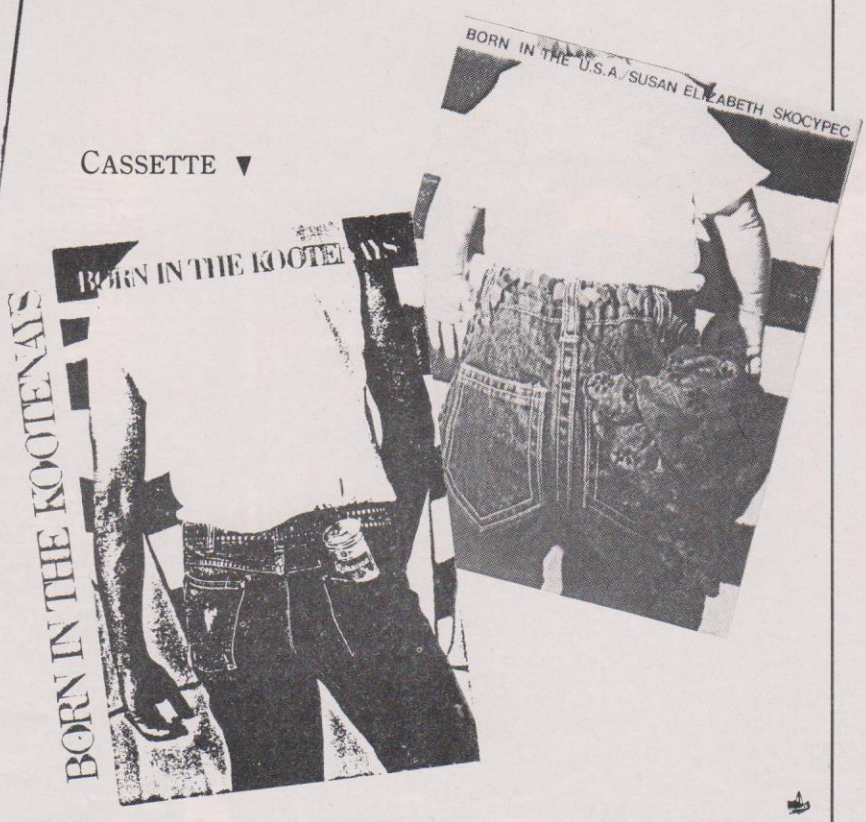
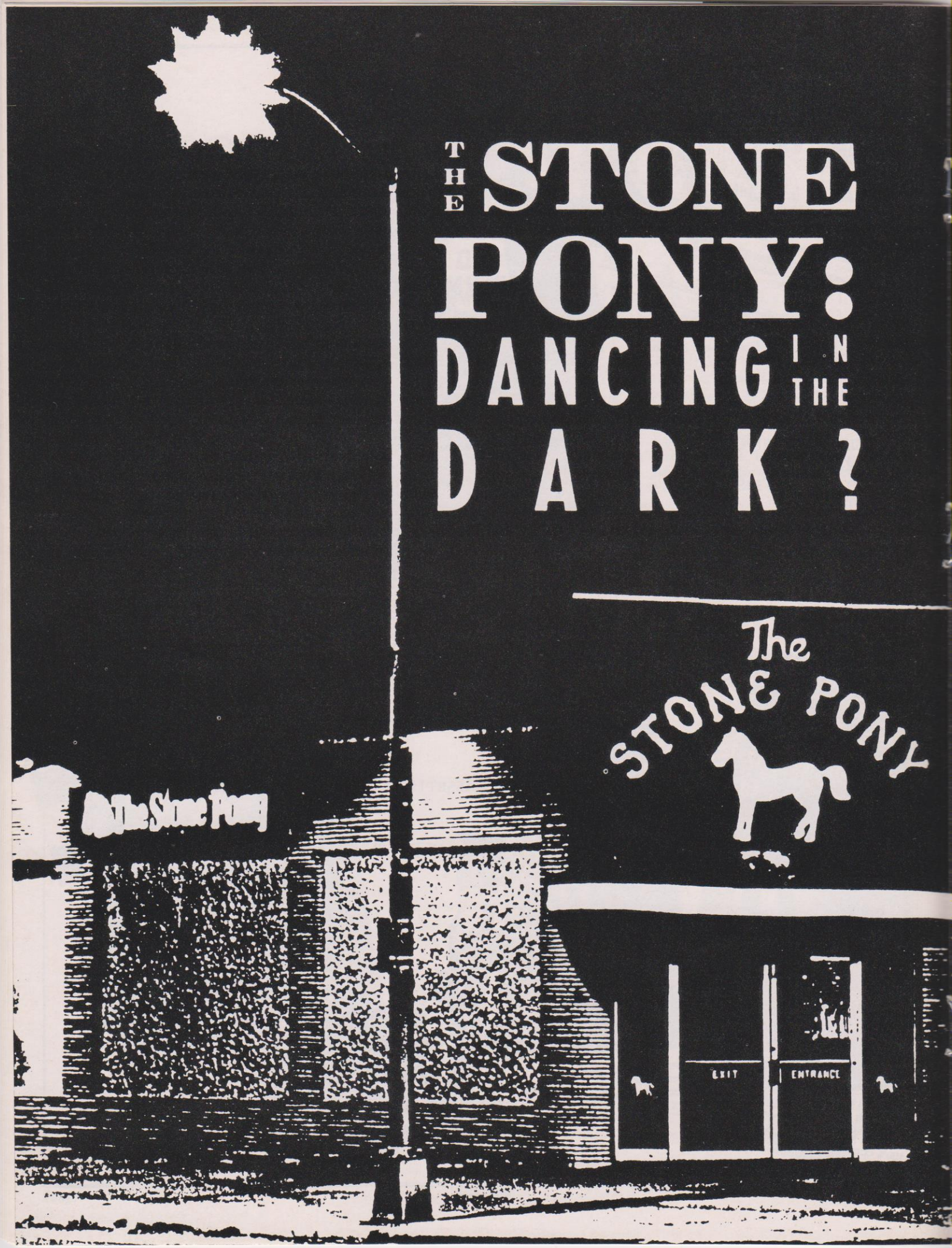



THE STONE PONY: DANCING IN THE DARK?
The Stone Pony
The STONE PONY
EXIT
ENTRANCE

By Robert Santelli

You've heard the rumors: The Stone Pony is going to close in six months; the Stone Pony isn't going to close, just re-locate somewhere else on the Jersey Shore; Bruce Springsteen bought the Stone Pony; Bruce Springsteen will perform at the Stone Pony's "farewell" concert; and there are others, too.

Perhaps now is the time to separate fact from fiction. Below are the words and ideas of the three parties involved in the Stone Pony controversy. Each one granted Backstreets an exclusive interview to clear the air and set the record straight. What follows, then, is the most complete picture of the controversy yet offered to rock fans, especially those with more than a passing interest in Jersey Shore rock 'n' roll and its flagship club.

But first some background information. If you've ever visited Asbury Park, you know the city is a decaying resort town. Urban blight is everywhere. A gloom hangs over the city like a worn, tattered overcoat.

A few years ago, the city of Asbury Park decided a massive re-development plan was the only thing that could pump money into the city and save it from itself. That plan was — and still is — a complex and expensive one by any standards. It is also not supported by every resident of Asbury Park, since such a plan will permanently alter the city's make-up and force most of its bluecollar and minority residents out of Asbury Park forever.

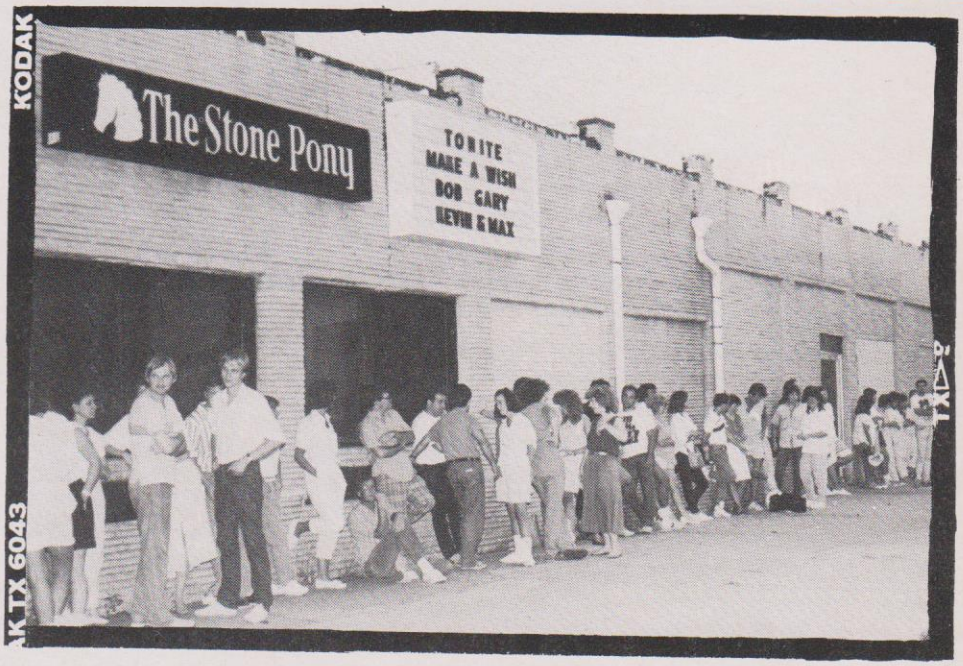
On the drawing board are condominiums, high rise apartments with ocean views, restaurants, shops, walkways, parks, and a thoroughly re-vamped downtown district and beachfront area. Gone will be most of the city's cheap housing. Gone, too, will be the beer joints, amusement rides, and most of the boardwalk as we know it today.

One of the problems with the grand plan is what to do with the existing businesses in Asbury Park that stand in the way of re-development. Only a few are deemed valuable enough to the city's future to consider saving. The Stone Pony is one of them.

The Stone Pony and other Asbury rock clubs like the legendary Mrs. Jay's — the biker bar that sits next

Continued on next page

Butch Peilka, co-owner: **"I'd like to stay right here where we are. The Pony has a certain mystique and sense of history that might be lost in re-location. Everything that we built up might be lost, gone forever."**



KATHIE MANIACI PHOTOS

Continued from previous page

to the Pony — were told the area they are located in is an officially designated blighted area and that the buildings they presently occupy eventually will be torn down in the name of progress.

Angry protests followed. It was finally agreed that those establishments such as the Stone Pony could and should remain in Asbury Park, provided they re-locate to the southern-most end of the city in what, on paper, is known as Asbury Park's "Entertainment Zone."

Butch Peilka, a co-owner of the Stone Pony, suggested that the Casino Arena, a one-time concert hall adjacent to the beach, be considered a possible re-location site for his club as well as the other establishments (Asbury Park Rock 'n' Roll Museum, for one) entangled in the development snarl that was now attracting national attention.

Both the city and the developers liked the idea. Soon word leaked out that the Casino Arena would be the home of the "new" Stone Pony, plus a Hard Rock Cafe, a state-of-the-art recording studio, the Asbury Park Rock 'n' Roll Museum and perhaps one or two other music-related establishments.

Unfortunately, nothing regarding these plans has been confirmed and set into the master re-development scheme. In the meantime a small, but growing group of Pony diehards, made up mostly of those who view the club as a rock 'n' roll institution and an integral part of rock history, are beginning to raise objections to the demolition plans — even if re-location of the Pony were guaranteed.

And there it stands.

From all this, there are some "definites." They are:

- Sometime in the future the original Stone Pony will be demolished.
- The Pony has no legal recourse, since the city has designated the land and the building "blighted."
- If and when the Asbury Park re-development plans move into high gear, the city's music scene will swiftly become a thing of the past.

Butch Peilka, co-owner of the Pony

We haven't met with anyone from the town or the developers regarding the Stone Pony in the last nine months. The deal is still pretty much the same as it's always been: The Pony is going to go. Nevertheless, we're just going ahead with our business of presenting the best music entertainment we can because we just don't know when this is going to happen.

We find it amazing that despite all the rumors this thing has created, no one has found the time to tell us what's going on. I'm talking about the city and the developers. I'd like to put in a new floor and a new ladies room. The Pony desperately needs both. But it's stupid to do that if we're going to be knocked down in a year or two. We've been here for 14 years now. This place needs a lot of renovation. There is no question about that.

We heard all these ideas about re-location in some other part of Asbury. We suggested the Casino Arena. But if you take a look at the Casino, nothing has been done — nothing at all. That's a huge re-modeling job in itself. And we don't want the Pony to be destroyed and then have to wait five years for the Casino or any other re-location spot to be ready for our use. We want to go from one club to the next without stopping business.

The whole block that the Stone Pony sits on is considered blighted. So what we did was form a corporation. What that comes down to is this: it's not just the Stone Pony that's involved in re-location now. It's Mrs. Jay's, J.C. Higgenbottom's, and the Stone Pony T-Shirt building. Fortunately, the floor-space of the Casino Arena is huge. We'd have a club twice as big as the present Pony. But there's a lot of work that needs to be done before we, or anyone else, can move there.

On one hand I'd like to stay right here where we are. The Pony has a certain mystique and sense of history that might be lost in re-location. Everything that we built up might be lost, gone forever.

On the other hand, a larger Pony would mean we'd be able to bring in larger acts, big national acts. Also, we might set it up different so that people could eat before and even during a show, kind of like the set-up at the Bottom Line in New York.

It's funny, but lately a lot more celebrities have been showing up at the Pony. Rob Lowe, the actor, was here last night. Carmine Appice, the drummer from Vanilla Fudge and a whole lot of other groups, came down and jammed the night before that. A lot of people are sitting in on Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays. It's been a lot of fun. I wonder how much of that would go on in the new club?

Everyone — the town, the mayor, the developers — says that they want the Stone Pony to stay in Asbury Park and become part of the city's future. They say there's a place for us. That's great. But I don't see it. Show me a place I can move into, and then I'll believe it.

John McLaughlin, spokesperson for the Carabetto-Vaccaro Corporation, Asbury Park developers

We can appreciate that the Stone Pony has become somewhat of an institution to the music world. However, as developers, we have no control over its future. We were chosen by the city of Asbury Park and are bound by contract to implement the city's waterfront re-development plans. These plans were devised before we ever came into town. They're not

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our plans. A lot of people just don't realize that.

It is true that the Stone Pony will eventually be torn down. But any property owner whose property has been condemned has the option to re-locate in the city. We are hoping that the Stone Pony will exercise that option. At this point, there is nothing official to report from our end regarding the re-location of the Stone Pony. There has been talk of the Pony re-locating on the south end of town which is designated an entertainment zone. We have been working on several different ideas about this, but nothing has been firmed up. Once the Pony has re-located, a high rise condominium will go up in its place, according to the current plans.

Unfortunately, we're in a situation where we cannot please everyone. Basically, you're talking about one building versus an absolutely devastated town. Do we envision public resentment regarding the Pony plans? Yes, we do. However, we feel that people will look into this and see that it's the only way for the city to go.

Sam Addeo, City Manager of Asbury Park

I think this whole thing about rock 'n' roll in Asbury Park and the knocking down of the Stone Pony is a contrived issue. I keep reading that the city is doing this and will be doing that. We've really not done anything yet. We're not at odds with anyone. I think the owners of the Stone Pony might be anxious to go ahead with re-development plans. It's a matter of economics.

Yes, the city of Asbury Park is re-designing its beachfront area. That's not a sin. Some people in rock 'n' roll want us to keep things as they are, keep the Stone Pony where it is, and don't do anything to improve Asbury Park so some kid from Takoma can hitchhike here and be disillusioned. That's absurd. Those people that think the Pony is a shrine don't pay taxes in our town.

Some reporter called me up not too long ago and said, "What's the matter? Don't you like rock 'n' roll?" I had to laugh. I happen to be into all types of music, including rock 'n' roll. I used to stay out all night and hang out at bars which featured rock. I remember going to the old Sunshine Inn to see Uriah Heep and Long John Baldry. But as far as the Stone Pony being some sort of shrine, what can I say? The Stone Pony means a lot to a lot of people. I understand that. But I don't know if the people who live in Asbury Park and who are raising families here see the Pony that way. There are different viewpoints on the matter. Some of the senior citizens in town see it as a bother. I don't share that point of view. But when you have to raise a family in this town, you're interested in other things than the preservation of the Stone Pony. That's the way it is.

Sam Addeo, City Manager: **"Everyone is proud that Bruce spent a lot of time here. But I don't really know what that notoriety has done to 'pay the rent.' There would probably never be another Springsteen to come out of the Pony, anyway."**

There would probably never be another Springsteen to come out of the Pony, anyway. He would probably come out of some bar, maybe on Long Beach Island (a summer resort south of Asbury Park), I don't know. Times have changed. Look at Bon Jovi. He used to practice across the street (from City Hall) in a monstrous building that you could rent for $150 a month. I'm talking about the whole building. But now rents are higher and you're not going to have that sort of thing.

Remember, too, there are plans to re-locate the Stone Pony to another part of town in an entertainment district. Still, you can't create the same conditions that existed when Bruce Springsteen was formulating his music. And I don't think you'd want to, either.

Everyone is proud that Bruce Springsteen spent a lot of time here. But I don't really know what that notoriety has done to "pay the rent," as they say. I really have mixed feelings. Yes, as an individual I appreciate what the Stone Pony has done. But as city manager, I have to think of Asbury Park first.

If there was a move from the public sector to save the Stone Pony, it would be treated as yet another swell of public opinion that has been raised for or against the project. There's no percentage in it for me, as city manager of Asbury Park, to keep the city a breeding ground for more rock bands. I would rather have the building across the street where Bon Jovi practiced not vacant, but full and its occupants paying taxes.

(To voice your views on the fate of the Stone Pony, we suggest you write Mr. Addeo, City Hall, Asbury Park, NJ 07712.)

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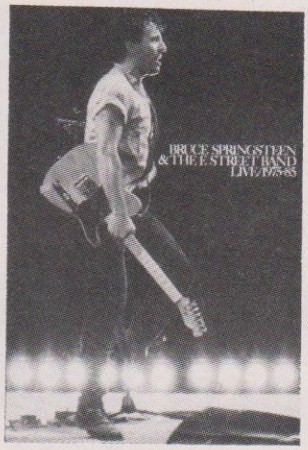

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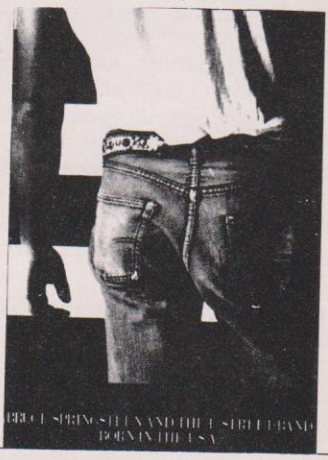

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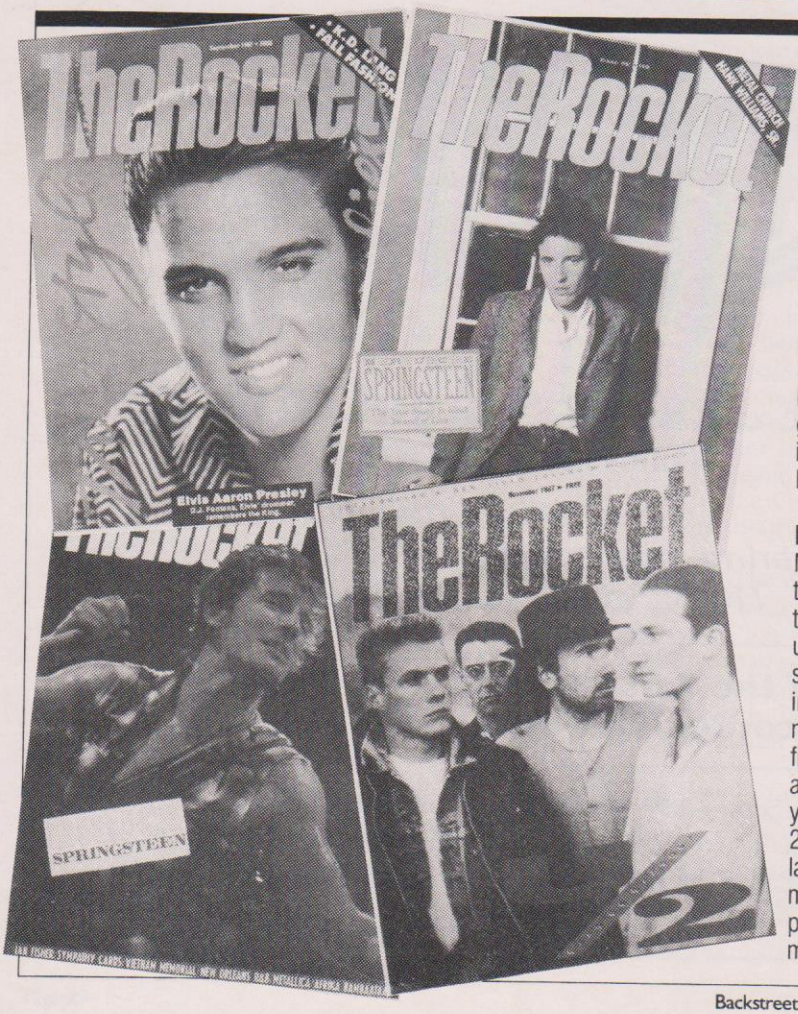

As Shakespeare say, "Is you or is you not a rocker?"

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When Bob Dylan's *Blood on the Tracks* was released, *Rolling Stone* thought it was such a monumental album they had more than a dozen different rock critics write long and detailed reviews of the record and ended up devoting much of that issue just to that single record. To the readers of *Backstreets,* every Bruce Springsteen record is a heralded event, but particularly *Tunnel of Love,* Springsteen's long-awaited studio follow-up to *Born in the USA.* Coming at the point in his career where every move starts headlines, it would be hard not to call this one of Bruce Springsteen's most crucial records.

If nothing else, *Tunnel of Love* is clearly Springsteen's most personal record and to cover the album in an intimate and personal way, *Backstreets* asked all our readers (through our Boss Hotline message) and all our staff, to submit short reviews of the record. We were deluged with responses from readers so we obviously couldn't run them all — a sampling follows. We also excerpted some of the most interesting reviews from other publications both in the US and the UK. Our attempt was to provide balanced coverage, reprinting both those with positive comments and those with a negative slant on things. So sit down in an easy chair, put your headphones on, and slide on into *Tunnel of Love.*

AS REVIEWED BY THE BACKSTREETS STAFF

"It wasn't love at first listen"

Like any lasting relationship it wasn't unequivocal love at first listen. Songs that I first loved grew even closer with each listen and those that were lukewarm revealed themselves bit by bit. I still don't care much for some of the synth "space" intros but the stripped down sound *a la* "Spare Parts" and "Cautious Man" is great.

For any relationship to last you can't keep secrets and Bruce has bared his soul with this one.

Mary Schuh
Backstreets Senior Editor

"We were growing up together"

Bruce Springsteen has done it again. Just when we think we have him figured out, he throws us a curve ball named *Tunnel of Love,* an album which shows all the complexities of relationships. Has Bruce finally written "married music?" As I was growing up, Bruce's music was a big part of my life; it got me through adolescence, some shit jobs and through college. The thing was, I always saw pieces of myself in his songs, I felt like we were growing up together.

Now I'm married and ridin' in the *Tunnel of Love,* not a kid anymore but still trying to grow up and understand myself. I love this record. I love it because I've felt all these different things in my heart, and I love it because Bruce can still reflect and express what's in my soul. I wasn't sure if he could do that anymore. *Tunnel of Love* makes me feel like I know him, and that he knows me.

Kathie Maniaci
Backstreets photographer

(Continued on next page)

TUNNEL-OF-LOVE

AS REVIEWED BY THE BACKSTREETS STAFF

(Continued from previous page)

"The hopes and fears we all possess"

"I want to know if love is real," was the question Bruce Springsteen cried out in "Born to Run." *Tunnel of Love* is an exploration through that question; a series of snapshots of relationships at different stages — from the "head over heels" simplicity of "All That Heaven Will Allow," to the tenuous status of "Brilliant Disguise," to the eventual isolation of "When You're Alone." The characters, whatever their perspective, are looking for answers to a question within us all. Springsteen has opened his thoughts to us, unafraid to show his worst fears, alongside his greatest hopes. Does *Tunnel of Love* show his own relationship in crisis? That question is a misguided one, for *Tunnel of Love* is the hopes and fears we all possess, that we question eternally, that never leave us, and that make us human, as we ride down into this Tunnel of Love.

Erik Flannigan
Backstreets Senior Editor

"It's the record that Bruce Springsteen had to make, much as Neil Young's 'Time Fades Away' diffused the pop star adulation that had been the result of 'Harvest.'"

"Like Bob Dylan"

"The new Springsteen album sounds like Bob Dylan."

Herb Cross
Backstreets' Editor's Dad

"Detailed snapshots of real people"

Tunnel of Love is a remarkably successful attempt to deflect the Bruce Springsteen myth. Unlike John Lennon's *Plastic Ono Band,* which punctured the aura that surrounded the Beatles by meeting it head on, *Tunnel of Love* works around the hype by excluding any grand statements. It's the record that Bruce Springsteen had to make, much as Neil Young's *Time Fades Away* diffused the pop star adulation that had been the result of *Harvest.*

"'The restless heart' becomes personified in the context of the world Springsteen creates here, a sort of lonely monster that devours marriages."

Thematic considerations aside, *Tunnel of Love* sees Bruce Springsteen concentrating on what he does best, providing well detailed snapshots of people caught in real situations. Although the music is at times derivative, which may be a result of not having the band's full input, this is one of Bruce's best LPs, maybe his finest of the decade. That "Brilliant Disguise" is a hit single may obscure what a finely drawn portrait of a relationship it reveals, just as the quality of "Dancing in the Dark" 's lyric was lost on many. As for "Valentine's Day," it's his best ballad since "Independence Day." The slow cascading keyboards that close that song seem to be a perfect coda to the album, warm, personal, and stately.

Robert Allen
Backstreets Proofreader

"Body and Soul"

Marriage and religion are the two themes on *Tunnel of Love* that at first seem most out of place, in that neither has seen much exploration in Springsteen's work. Though the horrors of his Catholic school upbringing have been brought up, one never felt that Bruce Springsteen had been touched by the hand of God. As for marriage, though he did include "I Wanna Marry You" on *The River,* it seemed a song more in the come-on tradition of his "Pretty Flamingo" story.

The one song that fronted both subjects was "Stolen Car," in its original version. After three choruses the song suddenly stops and Springsteen speaks alone with only a forlorn piano backing him, a stylistic technique that immediately identifies this as a dream sequence (the same haunting music backs the dream in "Downbound Train"). His dream is of marrying again, though at the altar as his lips touch his bride's, he feels "it all slip away." It is exactly the same tale told on "Cautious Man" where the protagonist again falls victim to "a restless heart."

"The restless heart" becomes personified in the context of the world Springsteen creates here, a sort of lonely monster that devours marriages. It's used within an album full of repetition. There are a dozen lines used from other songs and even one line used exactly the same in two different songs here — "he travels fastest who travels alone," a line so essential, Bruce used it twice. That doesn't seem strange coming from someone who told Dave Marsh in 1978, "I eat loneliness, man, I feed off it." Which is perhaps one of the reasons many people were surprised when Springsteen married Julianne Phillips in 1985.

Previously, Springsteen seemed to make the best time by traveling alone. But around the time of *The River,* something came up to take on this restless monster. Around this time Springsteen went to the wedding of his lighting designer, Marc Brickman, and found himself greatly affected by the power of the ceremony. He was so impressed with what Brickman's rabbi said ("When you're alone, without anybody, your dreams and fantasies are all of what you got, and when you get married, when you get together with someone, that is the first step towards making those dreams and hopes a reality.") that he reprised part of the ceremony for a song here ("When You're Alone"). Springsteen was so moved by the wedding that he told the tale to Kit Rachlis in a 1980 interview and even used the speech to introduce his story about the demise of Elvis Presley and how truly alone that man was.

The music at Brickman's wedding was Marvin Gaye and Kim Weston doing "It Takes Two," and in many ways, *Tunnel of Love* is both Springsteen's homage to that song and his attempt to rewrite it in various forms. "It ought to be easy/ought to be simple/man meets woman/they fall in love," he sings on the title track, ending with the melodramatic phrase, "you've got to learn to live with what you can't rise above, in the tunnel of love." The "tunnel of love" becomes Springsteen's metaphor for anyone entering a relationship — it is a risky journey, where one faces the "wetness" in our souls and one which offers no middle ground. You can't turn back in a tunnel of love but you can jump ship.

Charles R. Cross
Backstreets Editor

"Sounds like Simple Minds"

After the excessive hype that accompanied *Born in the USA* and the disappointing *Live* album, I admit that I was a bit burned out on Springsteen. Even my favorite songs, such as "I'm On Fire," had begun to sound stale from overkill.

Tunnel of Love, then, came as a relief: a break from the familiar "headbanded rock god" anthemic style. Who would have though that (in the title song) Bruce would ever sound like Simple Minds? Purists may fret; I call it a positive step.

It's not just the album's style that is so exciting; the songs themselves, though slickly produced, are as powerful as anything Springsteen has ever done.

Wendi Dunlap
Contributing Editor

(*Tunnel of Love* illustration by Andy Reid. Tunnel of Love type is from a sign on the side of Palace Amusements in Asbury Park, NJ, photographed by Kathie Maniaci. No Tunnel of Love exists anymore in Asbury Park — or anywhere else in America so far as we could find. Still, some suggest that the sign on Palace Amusements was the mythical impetus for Bruce Springsteen to name his album.)

TUNNEL·OF·LOVE

AS REVIEWED BY THE CRITICS

"Redeeming the time"

What the album is driving at is that in a world in which people are robbed of even their subjectivity — and therefore an identity that isn't merely a defensive mask — love isn't real, or real enough. Such love cannot sustain itself, let alone lovers. But *Tunnel of Love* argues that love damn well ought to sustain, that it is our duty to make it endure, that trying itself is a kind of redemption. As cultural historian and rabid Springsteen fan Marshall Berman has written, "Something is fundamentally wrong with modes of thought — whether they are called philosophy, history, or science — whose main force is to convince people there is no alternative to the way they live now." Think of that in terms of rock 'n' roll for a moment. Think of Presley, who left behind a wonderful promise and a legacy of rank hopelessness: no amount of talent can change things, once the world was all shook up, but now it has returned to its old ways and Elvis is an unprotesting part of it — its official greeter and its corpse deluxe. Bruce Springsteen, rock's most ardent suitor, has made a career out of a quest for an alternative to the way we live now; for all his fame and adulation, it's not clear he's made that aim concrete to his audience. But rock isn't finally consummated in crowds. The Ronettes' "Be My Baby" would be immortal if only one person had heard it — heard it, understood it, and acted on that understanding. In Springsteen, an idea takes shape, is given lucidity — it's pitched squarely between the imperative of Berman and that of the Ronettes. And it seems about as durable as humanly possible.

Howard Hampton
Boston Phoenix

"Real life resonance brightens haunting 'Tunnel'"

It takes a lot of work to mine Springsteen's *Tunnel of Love,* though, because the singer offers far fewer clues, musical or otherwise, to his true intention. "Ain't Got You," for example, is a Bo Diddley-style number with lyrics recapitulating the old got-everything-but-you approach, which Springsteen turns into a joke on his own celebrity with lines like "I been around the world and across the seven seas/Been paid a king's ransom for doin' what comes naturally." But is it a genre exercise, a true confession, or something in between?

Frankly, it doesn't matter, so long as we can learn something from it. And in the end, the real strength behind *Tunnel of Love* is that it doesn't offer answers, only examples, leaving it to each listener to sort things out.

Which, as Bruce Springsteen obviously knows, is the way life works anyway.

J.D. Considine
Baltimore Sun

"Bruce's best this decade"

Power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely. In most people's eyes, success spoilt Bruce Springsteen. By the time the Asbury kid — the world's finest living embodiment of the any-route-out-of-here-punk ideal — had clocked up 18 million sales with his "Born In Uncle Sam" album the critical knives were out for him.

First off, as his staggering success accelerated, came the idea that his last studio album — easily one of his best — could not be good, because nothing that's massively successful can be good.

Next came the stories: four million box sets allegedly slumbering in a disused warehouse surely indicated a false prophet. And finally and most importantly came the ridiculously sensationalist story that Bruce is a blue meanie, because he once borrowed ten dollars or something like that from someone and then sacked them ten years later.

Tunnel of Love, then, is The Boss' way out, a salvo at the people who talk about people who make music. *Tunnel of Love* is one of Bruce Springsteen's finest albums and easily his best this decade.

Bruce Springsteen is Elvis, Marlon and Johnny 99 all rolled into one — the kid with the sneer who's his own man, the street hassled Wayne who won his ribbons in the war of the heart by riding a fender and strumming a loaded guitar — in smalltown, anytown, your town.

Pop music is all about simple tunes and Springsteen's are worth every last cent of his billions. Fifty million Bruce Springsteen fans can't be wrong, yet even they can't begin to see just how right they are.

Neil Taylor
New Musical Express

"Bruce is Elvis, Marlon and Johnny 99 all rolled into one — the kid with the sneer."

"Worst record of his career"

Tunnel of Love, Bruce Springsteen's new love-song LP and his first new studio-recording since 1984's *Born in the USA,* is the worst record of his career, a selection of otherwise warm sentiments ruined by the attempt to put them into song.

Rock 'n' roll is a young man's game, and it is natural for one like the Boss to lose, say, a little hunger.

But here he tries to be everything. If he wants to go soft on us, he should just do an album of ballads. If he can rock out, still, then do it.

Marty Racine
Houston Chronicle

"'Tunnel of Love' argues that love damn well ought to sustain, that it is our duty to make it endure, that trying itself is a kind of redemption."

"Springsteen's darkest dreams"

As much as any album in rock, *Tunnel of Love* focuses on modern love in a way that makes the dangers seem so agonizingly real that love's inspiration and support — when found — become all the more blessed.

One of the criticisms of Springsteen is that he relies on the same images, and these songs are filled with references to cars and the night. But there is an unmistakable maturity.

There was once a sense in his writing that nothing frees you as much as a ride at night with the wind in your hair; that the freedom was synonymous with total independence, and that relationships somehow tied you down.

Tunnel of Love is exactly the right step by an artist who, for the second time in his career, has found himself battling careless accusations of being a rock 'n' roll false hero.

Robert Hilburn
Los Angeles Times

"It is exactly the right step by an artist who has found himself battling careless accusations of being a rock 'n' roll false hero."

"Songs for the witching season"

The album has a solid contemporary sheen, but it is never polished. It is as if Springsteen had buffed up a brand-new car with a sandpaper chamois. Using only simple instrumentation, with an occasional synthesizer riff or guitar blitz, Springsteen has created a modern surrogate for the resonant mystery on old blues and early rock records. This makes *Tunnel of Love* close kin to his 1982 solo effort, *Nebraska,* which was meant to sound homemade. *Tunnel of Love* takes that approach even further, into the mythic heart of American music and some slat-roof recording studio — maybe on a prairie, maybe near a

(Continued on next page)

TUNNEL-OF-LOVE

AS REVIEWED BY THE CRITICS

(Continued from previous page)

delta — where a singer sits down, lays down a few sides, then vanishes into the long night. *Tunnel of Love* has that kind of righteous power. It is a record that Springsteen has staked a lot on. It follows no formulas and does not provide what fans may first expect. But right now, anyhow, it sounds like the best record he has made.

Jay Cocks
Time

"Until now, even if you thought he was a florid goofball, you had to grant the man consistancy, a talent for conceiving albums as unified statements of purpose."

"The Boss pulls out"

Bruce Springsteen's *Tunnel of Love* (Columbia) — alternate titles : *Hot Dogs in Doughnuts* or *Boss Gotta Have It* — is, to lift a phrase from one of the songs, "One step up and two steps back." The album is unprecedented in the Springsteen canon: it's uneven. Until now, even if you thought he was a florid goofball, you had to grant the man consistency, a talent for conceiving albums as unified statements of purpose. His first two records were promising and callow; *Born to Run,* a sustained meditation on asking a girl to hop in your car, the apotheosis of the come-on; *Darkness at the Edge of Town,* a sustained florid goof; *The River,* goofballery redeemed as songs of innocence and experience; *Nebraska,* the seamless sequel to *Badlands* that Terrence Malick never made; *Born in the USA,* the spectacle of a goofball politicized.

By contrast, *Tunnel of Love* is a highly varied collection of love songs, some of them exciting, others sappy. The E Street Band is absent as such — Max Weinberg plays subtle drums on eight of the dozen songs, but other members pop up only here and there. Two rumors preceding *Tunnel* were that it was a country album (close but no cigar: blues and folk are the dominating genres), and that it was about sex (not entirely true, but whenever the subject does rear its head, the album chases greatness).

The Boss's butt was the center of attention on the cover of *Born in the USA;* on this one, it's the string tie that conceals the lump in his throat. Leaning against a cream-colored car whose make I suppose every Springsteen fan in the world except me has already figured out, the singer is all slicked-up and -down for a date: he wants you to hop in the car with him, but watch out, because in this anti-joyride, tramps like us, baby, we were born to marry.

Ken Tucker
Village Voice

"The Boss could easily have recaptured the charts with a third Big Noise. Instead, 'Tunnel' whispers."

"Married music"

Tunnel of Love is mostly about relationships, and this time around these are no summer romances. The characters in these songs are playing for keeps — torn between love and fear — and the struggle to keep their relationships alive is at the center of the album. Although there are moments of self-doubt (especially in the first single, "Brilliant Disguise"), the basic worth of the relationships is never questioned. Despite the guilt, doubt and bad memories that some relationships can engender, they're almost always preferable to the alternative, Springsteen seems to be saying. Now when Springsteen's characters run away, they go down to the highway to find "nothing but road."

The last song, "Valentine's Day," sounds like a farewell to the past in more ways than one. The last verse recalls lyrics from earlier songs and the final image is again of a man alone, driving down a lonely highway at night, but this time with someplace and someone to go to.

With *Tunnel of Love,* Springsteen has struck off in a bold new direction. In choosing his path, he has let a lot of things fall by the wayside and perhaps found his own independence day. Once again, Springsteen has faced his moment of truth and come out on top.

W.C. Stroby
Asbury Park Press

"Bruce the bleak balladeer"

Springsteen, a renowned technophobe, is a one-man band, playing acoustic guitar and harmonica. There's scant E Street participation, and not a note from the saxophone of Clarence Clemons, who surfaces only as a background singer on "When You're Alone."

After two monster successes, the Boss easily could have recaptured the charts with a third Big Noise. Instead, *Tunnel* whispers.

After abandoning, at least temporarily, the beautiful-loser theatrics and the Spectorian orchestration, can Springsteen retain his audience? *Tunnel*'s numbers may suffer without the bone-rattling wall of sound, the laryngitic hollering and such radio-accessible themes as defiance of authority and celebration of youth.

But sales are only one measure of success, and Springsteen's decision to release an album this uncompromising is as shrewd as it is admirable. Duplicating *Born in the USA* might have suggested a move toward conformity or, worse, engendered charges of selling out.

Edna Gunderson
USA Today

"Springsteen looks at love"

Mr. Springsteen's characters don't cling to partners unconditionally; he's didactic but not dictatorial. "Spare Parts," an exuberant country-blues stomp, is about an abandoned, unwed mother who considers desperate measures, then decides to pawn her engagement ring and get on with life instead. And in "When You're Alone," a jilted lover rejects his ex-girlfriend when she eventually returns. "Lucky Man," the flipside of the "Brilliant Disguise" single (not included on the album), explicitly reverses most of the album's messages, saying, "I don't miss no girl I don't miss no home/He travels fastest who travels alone" — although Mr. Springsteen's muttered vocals and the raw, galloping tune make him sound desperate rather than foot-loose.

Tunnel of Love isn't an intellectual breakthrough; Mr. Springsteen is hardly the first songwriter to address the limits of love. But with its dozen terse, careful, memorable songs, *Tunnel of Love* extends Mr. Springsteen's fatalism even further, dousing the last glimmer of unexamined hope and blocking the last escapist fantasies. "God have mercy on the man/Who doubts what he's sure of," Mr. Springsteen sings in "Brilliant Disguise." Now, with *Tunnel of Love,* he's no longer sure of anything. But he's facing his fears head-on.

Jon Pareless
The New York Times

"Bossa Nova"

Listen to that almost too-heavenly synth on "Walk Like a Man" or the Del Shannon "Runaway" organ on "Two Faces." It's all Bruce. And while his chops may not light up the sky, there's a rightness to the self-made music on *Tunnel of Love* that avoids the thin noodling or multi-track trickery of other studio denizens like Prince or Todd Rundgren. The result is the biggest surprise for long-time fans since *Darkness on the Edge of Town*'s fuel-injected Telecaster.

Gary Ricker
Phoenix New Times

TUNNEL-OF-LOVE

AS REVIEWED BY BACKSTREETS READERS

"Written from and of the male experience"

Tunnel of Love is a very rich, complex, compelling, and, on the whole, satisfying piece of work, despite some of the songs not quite connecting with/for me. But, there have been times before when his songs have not had their full impact on me, I have not appreciated them as much as I could, until three, four, five or more years after I first heard them. So I figure, it's OK. With Bruce, it's always worth the wait.

"Ain't Got You" is just plain funny. It shows a real ironic, self-effacing sense of humor. Especially the line "Been paid a king's ransom for doin' what comes naturally," when applied to Bruce himself. (Why assume *everything* an artist produces is *always* autobiographical?) Yeah, sure, it comes naturally — after years and years end upon end of nothing but practice practice practice. Done live, I can easily imagine "Ain't Got You" segueing into "Mona/ She's the One."

"All That Heaven Will Allow" is the one song from the album that causes me the most regret that *Tunnel of Love* was not released before my sister's wedding, so that I could have included it on one of the tapes I put together for the reception.

From the first listening of the entire album, "Spare Parts" immediately jumped out as my favorite song, and it continues to be so, primarily because it's the only song that speaks clearly from and to the female experience. I can't, and I won't, hold it against Bruce that nearly all of *Tunnel of Love* is written from and of the male experience (I mean, gee whiz, he can't help it, he *is* a man), but unfortunately I think that is why some of the songs don't quite connect for me. But "Spare Parts" certainly does. From the first notes of the galloping melody that reminds me of my favorite western, *Silverado,* to the closing lyrics that speak to me of the triumph that can be found in perseverance and simple survival, it grabs me. I don't know how else to say it. The song just GRABS ME.

"Two Faces" is shaping up to be my second favorite song, mostly because I really understand the Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, laughing and crying, hello and good-bye dichotomy. (Besides it has a lovely melody.)

And I would like to say that I'm already fed up with the "will it sell as many units as *Born in the USA?*" mentality. Who gives a flying fuck? Not I.

Katherine Young
Portland, OR

"I'd rate it 8 out of 8"

My reaction to *Tunnel of Love* would best be described as disappointment. The album just didn't quite work for me. If I was forced to rank Bruce's 8 non-live LP's (an arduous task, at best), *Tunnel of Love* would easily fall to number eight. I would be very surprised if it would make anyone's top four. It simply doesn't compare.

Bruce has established a formula which has made him hugely successful. After a monster album (*Born to Run, The River, Born in the USA*) he releases an unconventional LP (*Darkness, Nebraska,* and now *Tunnel of Love*). This distances Bruce from some fans and also garners praise from critics. It may also lessen some hype and even some expectations, thus ensuring the success of his subsequent LP. Well enough of the pop psychology, on to the album itself.

Often times upon first listening, I kept being reminded of Steve Earle. Much of *Tunnel of Love* sounds very similar to *Exit O* and *Guitar Town.* This leads to my second question. Where has Bruce acquired his southern accent? It began on *The River* and has become more and more pronounced ever since. Are you sure this is the same guy I heard on *Darkness* and *Born to Run*? Lyrically, Bruce is getting a little tired. (Bruce, would you please stop using the words "mister" and "baby"?) Obviously, the music is not ground-breaking. My favorite song, "Spare Parts," is simply a reworked version of "Seeds." So would I call this a bad album? No, not at all. Conversely, I would not call it a very good album. It is fair. Meanwhile, I'll just bide my time for two or three years until Bruce releases a full-fledged album with the entire E Street Band. I know it's coming.

Edward Cook
Fullerton, CA

"'All that Heaven Will Allow' causes me the most regret that it wasn't released before my sister's wedding."

"It sounds flat"

Tunnel of Love is the best sounding bootleg of studio outtakes I've ever heard. It's a good set of unfinished musical ideas with great potential, but that's it. No matter how beautiful the ideas are, for the most part they are sketches: *Born to Run* is an oil painting by comparison. *The Wild and Innocent* is a symphony; *Tunnel of Love* is a poem.

Ever since *Darkness* Bruce has been trying to simplify his music. The extended, gut-wrenching rock masterpieces of his second and third albums eventually gave way to a kind of "Bruce Beat" (copied so well by John Cougar Mellencamp, Steve Earle and others), on top of which he lays down his simple melodies. When worked up to its fullest potential, we get *Born in the USA.* When stripped naked we get *Nebraska.* And somewhere in between is *Tunnel of Love.*

This new album has an almost hypnotic quality to it, reminiscent of *Nebraska* but lacking its rough edge. Without this raw quality, *Tunnel of Love* sounds flat. My heart cries out for a sax solo on "Tougher than the Rest." "Tunnel of Love," the most interesting musical idea on the album, sounds especially drone. This song needs some PUNCH! Even the roller coaster and screams are mixed into oblivion.

Personally, I would like to see Bruce go the other way. "Bruce Springsteen and the London Symphony Orchestra," how's that for a heart-pounding album? Or maybe some hot horn arrangements? The Boss is at his best when he pushes himself to the limit. On *Tunnel of Love,* he's just sitting on a musical fence and afraid to take chances. It's a nice album to wake up to on a Sunday morning, but not for rockin' down the Jersey turnpike! Excuse me, where's my *Born to Run* cassette?

Richard Romagnoli
Parsippany, NY

"Personally, I'd like to see Bruce go the other way — 'Bruce Springsteen and the London Symphony Orchestra,' how's that for a heart-pounding album?"

"It brings a brutal innocence to love"

Springsteen has always been more of an imitator than an originator. His music combines this with that, but the magic, the brutal innocence, has always been his alone. Those who love an artist's gift constantly wonder how long the magic can last. In rock 'n' roll, invariably the skills may remain, but something more important dies. Add in the money, the wife, and the pressure to top the biggest selling album of your career, and anyone who cared had to wonder how brutal innocence could remain in Bruce Springsteen's work. Well, yesterday I bought *Tunnel of*

(Continued on next page)

TUNNEL-OF-LOVE

AS REVIEWED BY BACKSTREETS READERS

"'Tunnel of Love' reveals that Bruce has finally found a way to bring his gift, that brutal innocence, to love songs."

"This is a jewel of an album. I love the sound and feel of it. If I could crawl inside the speakers to get closer I would."

"A big part of me insists that 'Tunnel of Love' is a grand, glorious gift to us 'old folks.'"

(Continued from previous page)

Love, and though I can't explain how, damn it, that magic is still there.

Springsteen has always avoided the true cliche (though much of his imagery is well traveled). His songs would never say, as so many others did, "I'll make your dreams come true," but rather "Maybe I can't lay the stars at your feet." Keeping his fairly traditional love songs off his records has always seemed essential to Springsteen, because God knows how the same stale emotions have been bled to death down that road.

Tunnel of Love reveals that Springsteen has finally found a way to bring his gift, that brutal innocence, to love songs. We've all felt the exuberance of a new togetherness and the terror in a broken romance. We've also heard about it over and over in more songs than I care to remember. When you think for awhile though, anyone over 20 realizes that love is not exuberance and terror. They are only small parts of it. Love is struggle. The struggle to move through the fundamental contradiction of a simultaneous need for togetherness and separation — to share yourself yet remain yourself.

Steven Semeraro
Tulsa, OK

"A jewel of an album"

The wait is over. The question: Did marriage reduce Bruce to writing "Married Music"? The answer: No — we may have a marriage here, but this ain't no honeymoon of an album.

Bruce has stayed true to himself while he's added another major life experience from which to draw material from. Ain't no mistakin', ain't no flag wavin' hand raisin'. . . call to Glory.

Yes, this is a real personal sorta album and one that says to me we all know by now that life ain't no free ride, but love is the one we pay the highest price for and there's no guarantee or warranty no matter who you are, even Bruce Springsteen.

This is a jewel of an album. I love the sound and feel of it, if I could crawl inside the speakers I would to get closer, it's so good. The more you hear the album the better it gets.

Cathy Bell
Baltimore, MD

"Julio Iglesias"

My review of *Tunnel of Love* — "Electric Nebraska by Julio Iglesias."

Matt Engel
Wilkes-Barre, PA

"A mature follow-up"

As soon as I heard the release date of *Tunnel of Love* on the *Backstreets* Boss Hotline, I began to count off the days. . . . When I got it, I only had enough time to listen to Side A that day. I heard side B later that night. The first song, "Ain't Got You," sounded like a song off of the *Nebraska* record, as did some others on the album. I really liked the song.

The next song, "Tougher Than the Rest," reminds me of "Thunder Road" in the way that he's trying to get this girl to go with him. If she gives him a chance, he'll show her that he's tougher than the rest.

The rest of the songs are all great too. There isn't a song on the album that I don't like. "Two Faces" has a really catchy beat to it. "When You're Alone," to me sounds like a mature follow-up to "Born to Run." The singer is dealing with the fact that running away isn't always best. You're alone and there's things that will send you back home.

I don't have enough space to write my feelings about all the songs. "Walk Like a Man," which is a touching song, and "Valentine's Day" are the most personal songs on the album, I think. "Valentine's Day" is a perfect song to end the album with.

It was really hard writing this because there's no way that I could write down on a piece of paper, the way that the songs made me feel, every time that I hear them. Whatever the subject of a Bruce Springsteen album is, the songs are very special, and true to our own lives. Bruce writes about human emotions in a way that we can all relate to.

Karen O'Reilly
Chicago, IL

"A grand, glorious gift"

The thing I love most about *Tunnel of Love* is that, like *Nebraska,* Bruce has given us an album which I believe none of us was expecting. After the commercial breakthrough of "Hungry Heart" and *The River,* none of us was expecting an album of bleak, stark, intensely personal songs like those which surfaced on *Nebraska.* And more than a few of us long-time Bruce tramps (circa 1975 and before) felt with *Born in the USA,* the disappointing *Live* set and the "sameness" of the stadium shows that we'd forever lost the passion and intimacy of the early days. I never thought I'd see the day when I'd actually admit, as I did earlier this year, that I was growing sick and tired of hearing about Bruce. A big part of me grew cynical when I read in *Glory Days* about the calculated attempt to create "the big noise," and I'm certain many of us who were there in the old days felt that we'd seen something that we thought would never happen — Bruce had "sold out."

Tunnel of Love, an album of intimate, sparse, extremely personal songs, reaffirms my faith in Bruce. I love the LP because I *know* it's not going to sell 17 million copies. Like *Nebraska,* it's going to be an album which will be most appreciated by us *old* Bruce tramps. It would have been so easy for Bruce to crank out *Son of Born in the USA* for all the hangers-on who climbed aboard the Bruce bandwagon in '84 and '85. Instead, a big part of me *insists* that *Tunnel of Love* is a grand, glorious gift to us "old folks."

Pat McGuckin
Springfield, IL

"Just the guy with the guitar"

Forget the *New Musical Express.* Forget "the pride is back — born in America" commercialism. Forget the lip-syncing in the videos: Trust the art and not the artist. Forget all that stuff because *Tunnel of Love* is Bruce Springsteen's *Plastic Ono Band.* This is the album that "the guy with the guitar" (as Bruce has described himself) would make.

I have been listening to *Tunnel of Love* for a week. These are the most special moments for me:

"Ain't Got You" — Can you imagine this in concert? It starts with Bruce standing alone singing about how "I got all the riches baby any man ever knew, but the only thing I ain't got honey I ain't got you." Then the band picks up the beat, segues into "Not Fade Away," then full throttle into "She's the One," and finally back to just Bruce.

"One Step Up" — Has Bruce ever sang better than he sings here? This is the same guy who lost the girl in "Downbound Train." He's a little older and a lot more jaded, just fighting another battle in "our dirty little war."

"Tougher Than the Rest" — This is a march song for

TUNNEL-OF-LOVE

AS REVIEWED BY BACKSTREETS READERS

once-burned lovers who think twice before falling in love again (and then fall in love anyway). Probably (hopefully) the next single.

It is a privilege to walk through the *Tunnel of Love* with Bruce. This is a project that could have easily been shelved like so many of Bruce's best unreleased songs. Instead we get to see the mid-eighties Bruce, without the gloss, singing about being married and being in love and being scared. Just the guy with the guitar.

Leland Ackerley
Houston, TX

"This album means the most to me"

What do I think of *Tunnel of Love*? I thought, when we began to hear about the album to come, that I would miss the E Street Band sound and the flat-out *River*-style rockers. I didn't have to worry.

My favorite part of any Bruce album is always the lyrics. He has a way of taking thoughts I have had and just getting right to the core of them. This is especially true on this album. He said a few years ago that he wasn't ready to "write married music." He sure learned fast. He sounds like he has been married forever. This album sounds much more mature than past albums. On all the previous albums, with the cars, girls, etc., I would think back to high school days. Most of this album puts me right in the present. The one exception is "All that Heaven Will Allow," the music takes me back to high school and the '60s, with his music and words. I guess after 20 years of being married, this album means the most to me.

Pam McCampbell
Granger, IN

"I want more rock, less roll"

I'm not sure what exactly I expected from *Tunnel of Love,* but this wasn't it. I liked the album, but might have preferred more rock and less roll. The music is, however, prettier than on the others.

Reviews in order of preference: "All that Heaven Will Allow" — This cuts deep, and beautifully. Sometimes thinking that dying young might be preferable to whatever lies ahead, this is a great, motivating, inspirational song. It makes me want to make up for all the lives that have ever been thrown to the wind.

"When You're Alone" — What is special about this song is that as Bruce sings more and more about aloneness, he becomes less and less alone, with the continuing addition of overdubs and accompanying voices.

"Two Faces" — Most of us have at least two faces. Bruce's character is different only in that he has the courage to defy them.

"Valentine's Day" — Weird. The man should get his dreams analyzed.

Andy Tea
Seattle, WA

"Real love and real relationships"

Tunnel of Love is the album I've been waiting for. People unfamiliar with Bruce's music will think that love songs are a departure for Bruce, but some of us know better. Bruce has always chosen either not to record them or to give them away, such as "Hearts of Stone" to Southside Johnny or "Love's on the Line" to Gary U.S. Bonds. Finally Bruce gives them to us.

On the first listening, the full bodied songs like "Tunnel of Love," "Spare Parts" and "Brilliant Disguise" stand out. But respected listenings open up the joy of the more quiet songs like "Walk Like a Man," "Two Faces" and my favorite song, "One Step Up."

Every listening brings new discoveries. Bruce's lyrics paint vivid pictures. Wonderful lines like "Another battle in our dirty little war" from "One Step Up" and "When I saw your best steps stolen away from you" from "Walk Like a Man" are examples of Bruce's great songwriting.

As you should expect by now, Bruce's love songs are not of the "moon, June & spoon" variety but songs about real love and real relationships. Bruce has never been pressured to do what people expect and gratefully he didn't deliver *BITUSA* part two.

Doreen Wood
Hightstown, NJ

"This is a march song for once-burned lovers who think twice about falling in love again (and then fall in love anyway)."

"As a wife, mother and woman"

I accept *Backstreets'* challenge to review the album, but I can only write from *my* frame of reference: as a wife, mother, and woman who has struggled with the sometimes surprising complexities of loving, and being loved. I can't make informed statements about the technical aspects of the recording and, although I may subconsciously hear in the music the influence of a diverse group of earlier artists, I don't want to make the connection on paper because that would detract from the powerful effect this album has on me.

During the course of the album the songs tell stories about the uncertainties, the longings, the joys and sorrows of love found and lost, the love of mother for child, of son for father, the realities of life that make faithfulness the ultimate test, the fear and the responsibility that rides in on the coattails of grown-up commitment to another person. But, I don't want to analyze it, I just want to *feel* it.

This album is the one I've been waiting for, the one I've needed to hear. Whatever else Bruce has done, or will do in the future, these are the songs I will hold close to my heart, always. They speak to me in a personal way and cause me to view Bruce in a new light as well. *Tunnel of Love* is a masterpiece.

Ruth Calia
Hazlet, NJ

"As you should expect by now, Bruce's love songs are not of the 'moon, June and spoon,' variety but songs about real love and real relationships."

"We sabotage our own happiness"

As I sat listening to songs like "Drive all Night" and "Wreck on the Highway" from *The River* I wondered if Bruce would more fully explore this softer, achingly personal side of his music. *Tunnel of Love* is more than my wildest expectations — it's an album of such personal thoughts and fears it's almost embarassing to listen to. Bruce ignores the standard "my baby done me wrong" songs and turns betrayal inward. What threatens a relationship is the personal fears inside us all. We anticipate the worst and sabotage our own happiness with real or imagined inadequacies. It's pointless to really try to explain this because no one could say it any better than Bruce. This is a sad and beautiful album; but a joyous listening experience. Patty's backing vocals are a wonderful addition. And God bless Bruce for one of the few fully digital rock CDs.

Becky Kline
Allentown, PA

"'Tunnel of Love' is more than my wildest expectations — it's an album of such personal thoughts and fears it's almost embarassing to listen to."

In the mail

Address all correspondence to the Editor, Backstreets, *PO Box 51225, Seattle, WA 98115. We reserve the right to edit letters for space reasons. Typing and double-spacing (and shortening) your letter greatly increases the chance of it appearing in* Backstreets.

Ain't Got You

Dear Editor:

I'm an Italian fan and a subscriber of yours. I think that Bruce is the best thing in this bad world; in fact, he saves my life every day, giving me a "Reason to Live" with his music. Listen to my story: When Bruce played in Italy (Milan, 6-21-'85) during the *Born in the USA* tour, I was only 13 and my parents didn't let me go to see the Boss. From that moment, I am always against my family, because they think that I love much more Bruce and the E-Streeters than my family. It's actually true!!!

The only thing I'm looking for is to see Bruce live! When I didn't know Bruce's music and songs, I thought to be a loser; but when I heard him singing — "...'cause tramps like us, baby we're born to run!!!" I couldn't resist and I was converted: now I'm a tramp! I want Bruce in Italy, or in Europe, so I'll be able to see and to speak with him.

I hope you print this story on your paper: Last year, I had a girl; I loved her with all my heart and all my soul. She lives near my home, so I can see her every day. But now she is with another boy. But I still love and I can't resist to see myself without Caprice (the name of this girl). Yesterday I decided to attempt suicide and I put on the headphones to hear for the last time "...tramps like us." It was too strong, and I couldn't kill myself because I love Bruce!

Emanuele Ottavis
Torino, Italy

Brilliant Disguise

Dear Editor:

I am in total shock over a statement made in the *Backstreets* issue, Fall 1987. It was in a letter by Sal DiNatale, that said: "Springsteen seems to believe that happiness is going to be found in financial success or by marrying the girl of your dreams."

As a die-hard Springsteen fan, I have read numerous pieces of literature about him, his life, and his music. I am not an authority, but I am informed enough to know that DiNatale's statement is absurd. Sal, you seem to think Bruce Springsteen is primarily interested in money and women. Before you advertise stupid opinions like that, you should find out exactly what you are talking about. I'd like, for your sake, to provide you with some useful facts.

John Hammond once commented that Springsteen was the only performer he'd met in 40 years who cared nothing about money, which happens to be true, however unbelievable. When he was putting together songs for his *Darkness on the Edge of Town* album, there was one song called "Fire" that everyone in the band knew would be a hit. Bruce, however, chose not to include the song on the album because its content did not coincide with the message of the other songs on the record. Bruce knew he could make money from the song, but he chose not to publicize it.

If I am not mistaken, Springsteen waited quite a long time before touring in large arenas and stadiums. His career was very successful during the period of his first four albums, yet when he toured for those albums, he mostly played clubs and bars. If Bruce was money-hungry, I really think that he would have gone on to large arenas and stadium tours right after the success of the *Born to Run* LP.

And Bruce Springsteen would not dress in a casual T-shirt, jeans, and boots if he believed that financial success was the key to happiness. He wants to remain loyal to his working class background.

As for women, I really do not think that Springsteen believes that happiness lies in marrying the girl of your dreams, either. If he did believe this, then explain to me why he waited until May 1985 to get married. He could very well have gotten married sooner, but his career came first.

Sal, I'm sure that Bruce and his fans can do without your prayers.

John Crooks
Towson, MD

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Cautious Man

Dear Editor:

I'm just writing to give you another "what Bruce's music means to me" letter. I'm sick and tired of people writing in and complaining about this and that. Look at the things Bruce's music does for us! Five minutes ago, I was confused and in a state of deep depression, then I put on my copy of "Thunder Road" and now I am fine. Thanks, Bruce: I couldn't get through it without you!

Eric Penser
Woodmere, NY

No Nukes

Dear Editor:

Sitting at home in New York one day before Bruce's 38th birthday, I am reading your excellent magazine — a labor of love. It's hard to believe, but reading issue #22 I realize you keep improving with each effort. The videography is a terrific idea and very well done. However I felt compelled to write you about the date you attribute to the No Nukes footage. As you know, there were two shows that Bruce headlined for M.U.S.E. The first was on September 21, 1979 and the second was on Bruce's 30th birthday, September 23, 1979. I know because I was there. The footage used in

(Continued on next page)

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the *No Nukes* movie was taken from both shows: "The River" is from the 21st and "Thunder Road" and the edited "Quarter to Three" are from the 23rd. A few times during the second show he made references to his birthday, which he wasn't all that thrilled about that night, and at the end of "Quarter to Three" just prior to the traditional "I'm just a prisoner...of rock 'n' roll," he collapses on the stage and, after being "revived" says "I can't do this. I'm thirty years old!" The give-away, though, looking at the footage, is the change of shirts. He wore the same shirt throughout the 30th birthday show and he's wearing it on the latter two cuts in the film. During the first-ever performance of "The River," he's wearing a different shirt. There were literally hundreds of still photos published from both shows and they show the same. I've seen Bruce live two dozen times, going back to 1973 and that second M.U.S.E. show was perhaps the strangest show I've ever seen him do. As always the magic was there, but he seemed a little unsettled.

William Finch
New York, NY

Stand By Me

Dear Editor:

Two years ago, I had only been a Bruce Springsteen fan for a year. It was the hardest year of my life; my father had terminal lung cancer. I have often thought that Bruce and his music saved my life. Even in the times of utter hopelessness, Bruce made me happy. He showed me that I wasn't the only one with a broken heart and that life can go on.

I've always wished I could tell Bruce, but I know the chances of that are slim. The one thing left for me to do is to see Bruce in concert.

Two years ago, Bruce came to Pontiac. The major problem was I didn't hear about it until all the tickets were sold out! I was shocked. As much as Bruce Springsteen has meant to me, why didn't I know about it soon enough to make some arrangements.

Now Bruce is planning the release of a new studio album. I am so thrilled, I could cry! The news is there is no tour being planned for the moment. But I know Bruce well enough to think that will not always be the case. I would hope he will not forget that his fans need to share his music with him, face to face. Let's say he eventually tours again. Will I know about it soon enough to get tickets? With the demand so huge, it is pretty scary to be just one little fan in a little town waiting for the concert of my lifetime to happen, knowing I may miss my chance! That's why I thank you, *Backstreets*, for being my only source of Boss information worth trusting. Please, when the next tour rolls around, be on your toes and let us know as soon as possible!

If you happen to print this, please include my address so I can hear from other Boss fans.

Jill E. Malosh
PO Box 251
Beaverton, MI 48612

On collecting

Latest boot reviews

BY DANNY MARTINS

After a year with very few new bootleg releases, the arrival of *Tunnel of Love* is bound to get those underground presses rolling again, especially if a tour does happen soon. Most of the releases in recent months have merely been inferior repackagings of old material. There are a few new titles worth noting, but otherwise keep your money and wait for the next tour.

There is no more word on the "Castaway" bootleg CD we mentioned last issue. The November issue of *Q* magazine said that the CD release was imminent. To our knowledge no copies have yet surfaced, either here or in Europe. "Castaway" is a collection of *Born in the USA* outtakes and rare tracks from the '84 tour. Unfortunately, the sound quality of "Castaway" was never that good to begin with. Many of the outtakes included on it appeared in much higher quality on other boots. If the original source tape was only mediocre, digital mastering will not magically improve its sound. Although if produced this CD will be very rare and highly collectable, it is unlikely that the sound quality will improve just because of the CD format. Only an untainted, master tape would benefit from the increased fidelity and dynamic range of a compact disc.

The best new title of the year for both packaging and material is a two-LP set called "Rendezvous." This full color, gatefold set has three gorgeous Lynn Goldsmith shots, and excellent design, rivaling the best Swedish designs of the past. Unusually, the material lives up to the packaging.

"Rendezvous" is a collection of outtakes from *Born to Run, Darkness,* and *The River.* The selection is well chosen, picking up much of the best tunes from each session. Though many of these songs have appeared on other boots, the overall sound quality and selection is probably the best yet. The 18-song set includes essential versions of "The Promise," "Hearts of Stone," "Linda Let Me Be the One," and "Stolen Car." Also included is the alternate take of "Roulette," with "new vocal harmonies." This version is uncommon and quite different from the common outtake. "Rendezvous" is an excellent collection of outtakes, providing a well chosen overview of the studio sessions from 1975-1979.

Also new is a re-release of "Happy New Year" boot, a set taken from a soundboard tape of the 12-31-80 Nassau Coliseum show. The five-LP set has excellent sound quality, but the initial pressing did not comprise the complete show. The new "Golden Edition" corrects this problem by including a 45 with the two missing songs, "Factory" and "For You." The set comes in a gold box, which is numbered, color cover, colored vinyl, and the back cover reproduces Dave Marsh's review of the show. Though the set is one of the best from *The River* tour, the exorbitant cost of the new "Golden Edition" makes it a luxury, not a necessity.

Backstreets *in no manner, shape or form endorses these types of materials. Our word of advice to collectors of unauthorized materials is let the buyer beware. If you must buy this junk, stay clear of the real losers.*

Contest

Okay, you asked for it, so you got it. We've done contests that asked readers to select their favorite Springsteen song, their favorite bootleg — and our last contest, which was to select your favorite ten records to take to a desert island that aren't by Bruce Springsteen. But all along readers have asked that we do a simple poll so they can rate all of Springsteen's albums. With the release of *Tunnel of Love,* we finally feel that Springsteen's album catalog is large enough for a poll to make sense. So this is it: Send us on a postcard (and postcards *only please*) your rating of all nine of Bruce's official albums, rating with 9 points to your favorite album, and so on, with only one point going to your least favorite record.

Just to recap for those of you from Mars, the albums we're talking about are: *Greetings, The Wild the Innocent, Born to Run, Darkness, The River, Nebraska, Born in the USA, Live,* and *Tunnel of Love.* No bootlegs, no non-LP b-sides, just the official albums. And *please* list them in order, from favorite to least favorite, and apply the point scale. We'll put all the data into either Rosie or Bobby Jean, the computers, and spit out our readers' fave albums. The deadline for your submission is March 1, 1988 and we'll draw from all the entries and give away three *Backstreets* SuperSweatshirts. Remember — please send postcards (and *absolutely* only one postcard per household please because the point here is to get a close to scientific poll).

Speaking of contests, our "pick your ten records to bring to a desert island" contest was still in the works as of our press time. Winners and results will be reported next issue. One thing is clear — this was our most successful contest yet with close to a thousand responses. The entries so far run the gamut — everything from *Elton John's Greatest Hits* to Sonic Youth's *Sister.* We haven't actually compiled the results but one clear choice is Southside Johnny's *Hearts of Stone.* Almost everybody seems to have picked that.

Classifieds

PERSONALS

BRUCE PENPALS WANTED: MS. NORIKO NAKAO, 1-427 Ogawacho, Kodaira-shi, Tokyo, 187, Japan.

CONGRATULATIONS! BRUCE — "TUNNEL of Love" is euphoric! Continue writing Bruce Tramps: Darren, 88 Terhune Ave., Jersey City, NJ 07305-2010.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY FRANCO! RUDI XO. BETTER late than never.

BRUCE PENPALS WANTED FROM ALL OVER. STONY Yee, 101 E. 16th St., NY, NY 10003.

HELLO! LOOKING TO CORRESPOND WITH FANS, collectors of Graham Parker, Mink DeVille, Michael Stanley Band. Tony Shramko, 32 Pine Road, Westford, MA 01886.

WANTED

WANTED: BRUCE'S RECENT SHOWS AT THE STONE Pony, any or all. I have many shows to trade for. Sharon Carlos, 1551 Burkhart Ave., San Leandro, CA 94579.

BRUCE AUDIO AND VIDEO, 1969-1986 TO TRADE. Your list gets mine. David Hill, 1154 25th St. NW, Washington, DC 20037.

BRUCE TAPES TO TRADE. SEND YOUR LIST TO: Peter Karlsson, J.A. Perssonsgatan 25, S-522 00, Tidaholm, Sweden.

WOULD LIKE TO TRADE BRUCE LIVE TAPES FOR MY collectibles. Your list gets mine. J. Gsire, 30 Stevens #309, Bridgeport, CT 06606.

BRUCE, BON JOVI, NILS, PIC DISCS, IMPORTS, 7", 12", US concert t-shirts, etc. Send SASE for free list. Randy Houser, 4072 E. Clinton Ave., Fresno, CA 93703. (209) 485-9506.

WANTED: LIVE SPRINGSTEEN FOR TRADE. YOUR list gets mine. Gregg, S.C.S.U., Brownell Hall, Box 251, New Haven, CT 06515.

WANTED: BRUCE TAPES TO TRADE. ANY SIZE LIST welcome. Bill Maloney, 103 Oak St., Harrison, NY 10528.

SPRINGSTEEN TAPES TO TRADE. YOUR LIST GETS mine. Looking for any recent club dates. Jean Dobson, 2662 Ocean Ave. #F-11, Brooklyn, NY 11229.

BRUCE, NILS, JOHN EDDIE! SEND SASE. CFNY, Box 911, NYC 10008. Attention: BRKBK6.

LIVE BRUCE. HAVE OVER 650 AUDIO SHOWS AND tons of video. Write for my newest list. Joe Crawford, 1715 Northfield Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15204.

BRUCE VIDEO TO TRADE. ALSO INTERESTED IN trading for other acts. Matthew Flint, PO Box 616, Broadway, NSW, Australia, 2007.

WANTED: PROMO POSTER OF "GLORY DAYS" book by Dave Marsh. Cannot find one in Fresno. Will trade for similar item. Randy Houser, 4072 E. Clinton, Fresno, CA 93703.

HAVE AND WANT RAREST AUDIO/VIDEO. ED Kosinski, 2209 Stateline Rd., Richmond, IL 60071.

FOR SALE

SPRINGSTEEN FANS — "GREETINGS FROM Asbury Park, NJ" is the hottest book to touch base with Bruce and Asbury Park, NJ. Autographed by the author. $27 postage paid. Greetings Publications, PO Box 107, Asbury Park, NJ 07712.

PINK CADILLAC BIRTHDAY CARDS. THE ONLY birthday card for Springsteen fans. Only $2. T. Lanham, PO Box 11374, Cleveland, OH 44111.

BRUCE COLLECTION UP FOR AUCTION. PLEASE send SASE for current list to Kimberly Gillespie, 949 Colony Drive, Erie, PA 16505.

SELLING COLLECTION. ALL BOSS GOODIES/MINT import live LPs. High quality sound. Color covers. Send SASE for list. PO Box 15103, Mpls, MN 55415.

BRUCE POSTER AND MAGAZINE AUCTION. LOTS OF cool stuff. Send stamp for list. Joe Crawford, 1715 Northfield Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15204.

SPRINGSTEEN PROMO POSTER FOR SALE. SEND A large self addressed stamp envelope to David Denenberg, 607 Wayfield, Wynnewood, PA 19096.

FOR AUCTION/SALE. EXTENSIVE BRUCE collection. Original Jukes jacket, imports, large magazine collection, posters, promos. Send SASE: T. Erke, 4780 Liberty Ave., 2nd Flr, Pittsburgh, PA 15224.

SPRINGSTEEN CONCERT PHOTOS FOR SALE. FIVE 4x5 color prints for $3 or 3 8 x 10 color prints for $10. All photos taken with photo passes. Full money back guarantee. Send to: David Denenberg, 607 Wayfield, Wynnewood, PA 19096.

LONGTIME SERIOUS SPRINGSTEEN COLLECTOR ('75 on) selling majority of serious collection of posters, singles, LPs, mags and memorabilia. Please send legal size SASE w/ .39 postage (4 IRCs foreign) for list. Also available in limited quantities: Japanese rare compact disc 4-track w/ "Incident" and "For You" + 2 for $40. "Nebraska" rare US 2-sided 40x40 promo poster for $40. Add $3 postage/ins. We will send COD also. All orders/ envelopes to: Rare Bruce List, PO Box 10161, Silver Springs, MD 20904. (please send m.o.s. only)

Rates

CLASSIFIED RATES: RATES ARE $1 A WORD for each word with 10 words or $10 minimum for all commercial ads, trades, wants, for sales, or tapes. Ads that have no commercial intent, including pen pals, messages and the like are only 50 cents per words, ten words minimum. No ads selling bootleg or unauthorized materials will be accepted. Write for display advertising rates. Backstreets assumes no responsibility for any advertisements in the magazine. Please write our Consumer Services Department if you have any problems with an advertiser. Send all ads to Classifieds, Backstreets, PO Box 51225, Seattle, WA 98115. Thanks.

BOSS PINS!

PINK CADILLAC PIN!

The original, the classic, the finest Pink Cadillac pin in the world, available exclusively through us. Four colors, pinstriped in gold in hard enamel. Finest materials. An essential item.

'57 CHEVY PIN!

Great new yellow '57 Chevy pin! Four colors. Probably the nicest car pin we've seen. Whitewalls, gold pinstrips and more. Soon to become a classic! The same color and shape as a famous rock star's first car!

SNEAKERS PIN!

You've seen classic sneakers like this before, now available in a hard enamel pin—guaranteed the best reproduction of these sneakers you've seen or your money back! Classic black with white, gold striping.

Backstreets
THE BOSS MAGAZINE

BACKSTREETS PIN!

New Design in great hard enamel—a must for any Backstreets subscriber. Purple enamel center, gold pinstriping. Perfect size for your lapel! Reads "The Boss Magazine." Be the first on your block!

JUKEBOX PIN!

Brand new style—one of the most beautiful pins you'll ever see. This is an accurate reproduction of a Wurlitzer 1015, considered the classic model of the '50s jukebox (the one with bubbles running up the side). Pin is greatly detailed with more than four colors used, all with gold plating. A must.

All pins are **$5 each** or **$16 for four.** Specify pin style. All designs also available as keychains for **$6 each. Add 50 cents** per order shipping in the US and Canada; $1 overseas. We guarantee these are the finest pins in the world or your money back!

Backstreet Records Pins, PO Box 51219, Seattle, WA 98115.

PORTRAITS DRAWN FROM PHOTOS. SASE FOR sample, details. Hill's, 1506 E. Cherry, Enid, OK 73701.

SPRINGSTEEN AUCTION LIST. SEND SASE TO THunder Road, Box 861, Cypress, CA 90630.

LIFE SIZE 6 FT. BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN POSTER, Europe. Bruce PO Box 891, Stn F., Toronto, Canada M4Y 2N9. Satin jackets also.

DEADHEADS: SUBSCRIBE TO THE GOLDEN ROAD, the Backstreets for fans of the Dead. The next four issues for only $12. Send check or money order to The Golden Road, 484 Lake Park Ave., #82, Oakland, CA 95610.

FOR SALE: THE OCTOBER 1987 ISSUE OF THE Rocket magazine featuring a gorgeous Lynn Goldsmith cover and a feature review of "Tunnel of Love," written by Charles R. Cross. Cover alone makes it an essential Bruce magazine. Price is $5 postpaid US ($6 overseas). Send to: The Rocket Magazine, 2028 Fifth Avenue, Seattle, WA 98121.

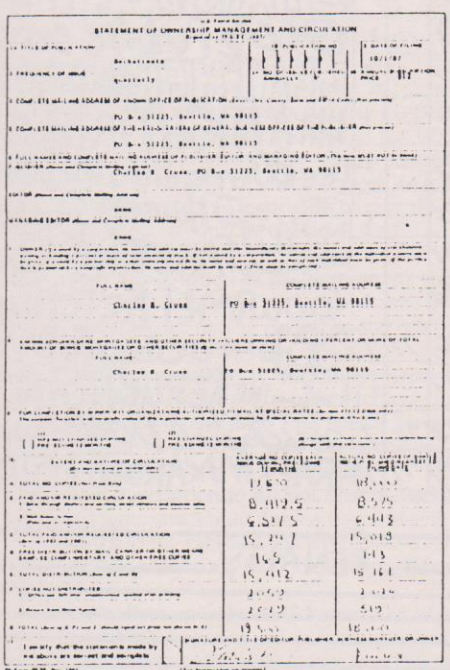
11x14 BOOKLET OF 100, 11x14 B/W ONSTAGE Eastern '72-85 unpublished Bruce closeups, $29. 41 more poses, $12 (original 11x14 glossies of all: 5/$20, 50/$169, 100/$299). Color 3x5's SALE: 24/$12, 48/$19. Old tour shirts, passes, buttons: List. SASE: Barr, Box 610, Wauna, WA 98395.

PHOTOS: 10,000 OLD/NEW STARS. BRUCE 1972- on. Onstage/offstage. Color. Sample $2: SASE: Barr, BOx 610, Wauna, WA 98395.

BRUCE/BORN TO RUN (LIVE) UK RELEASE AVAIL- able in the following formats: limited edition compact disc single $30; two record boxed set $30; twelve inch PS $7; seven inch PS $4. Other items: Dancing in the Dark twelve inch Mexico, red vinyl $30. War UK twelve inch poster sleeve $10. Little Steven Bitter Fruit + 2 compact disc single $15. US add $2.50 for postage, overseas please write first. To Mod Lang, PO Box 10111, Berkeley, CA 94809. Telephone (415) 526-8777.

PHOTOS OF BRUCE, E STREET BAND (PAST AND present), recent candids of Little Steven, Max & Nils, Beaver Brown, John Eddie, Southside, Jukes, Bon Jovi, Glen Burtnick, much more. SASE for details to: Rockphotos, PO Box 232, Lavallette, NJ 08375. Europe — $1.00 for details.

SELLOUT! 5,000 DIFFERENT ORIGINAL CLOSE-UP photos: b&w 11x14s, $3; b&w 8x10s $2; color 8x10s $4; color 3x5s $1; b&w 3x5s .50; negatives, slides. Off/onstage. Old/new. Postal MOs only. L.S.A.S.E. Nancy, Box 610, Wauna, WA 98395.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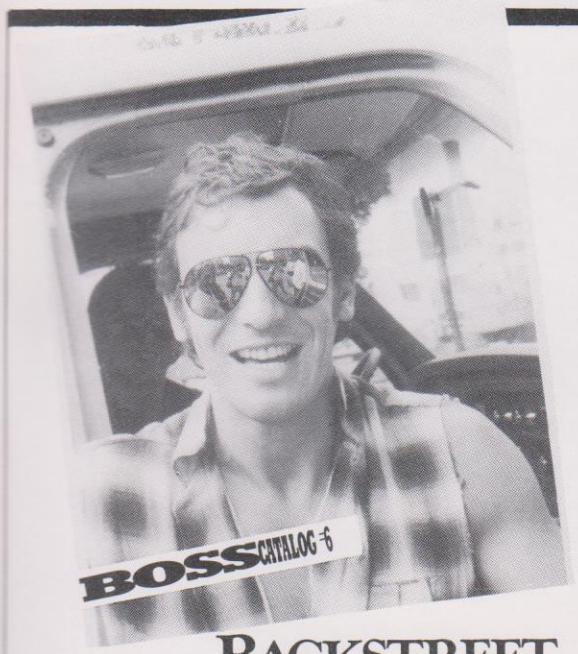
THIS TIME	LAST TIME	TIMES ON LIST				
1	1	7	BFJS	34	96	2
2	-	1	TUNNEL of LOVE	35	-	1
3	-	1	WALK LIKE A MAN	36	-	1
4	4	2	DARKNESS (THE ERA)	37	-	1
5	-	1	Rolling Rock BEER	38	3/8	4
6	18	3	THE BOSS HOT LINE	39	3/6	7
7	13	4	Safe SEX!	40	60	4
8	-	1	HAIL HAIL Rock & Roll!	41	69	2
9	-	1	The BIG SLEEP	42	-	1
10	16	7	BACKSTREETS THE MAG.	43	8/5	2
11	-	1	BARNEY FIFES LETHAL WEAPONS!	44	-	1
12	12	7	Murder Inc.	45	-	1
13	-	1	Hippy UNDERARM DEODORANT	46	80	2
14	63	5	TANQUERY AND Wine	47	-	1
15	76	2	DANNY BONADUCE	48	89	7
16	74	2	america IN 1955	49	4/6	5
17	15	7	PROVE IT ALL NIGHT LIVE	50	-	1
18	-	1	A RESTLESS HEART	51	-	1
19	-	1	TATTOOED (LOVE) (FEAR)	52	-	1
20	5	7	Southside C.D.'s	53	-	1
21	6	2	U2's THE EDGE	54	89	4
22	35	2	DOUBLE Martinis	55	-	1
23	2/3	2	"NO NUKES" VIDEO	56	-	3
24	2/4	2	DRUNK WHEN famous	57	-	1
25	-	1	BEAGLES	58	53	3
26	86	2	Vicki Peterson	59	-	1
27	-	1	TOFU BURGERS	60	19	2
28	2	7	Steve Van Zandt	61	-	1
29	5/4	3	BAD ELVIS MOVIES	62	-	1
30	-	1	slow songs	63	-	1
31	7/4	2	Wheat grass	64	54	2
32	4/5	3	BBQ CHICKEN	65	-	1
33	3/3	4	CONVERSE HI-TOPS	66	5	2
			AM PM 2 FOR 1$ BURGERS	67	-	1
			GLEN BURTNICK	68	-	1
			VOYEURISM!	69	-	1
			Mr. WIZARD	70	65	6
			9/23/49	71	-	1
			BeTrue	72	-	1
			mountain Bikes	73	-	1
			The BUSTER	74	-	1
			BLIMPIES	75	-	1
			Fred G WYNE SITCOMS	76	-	1
			FATAL ATTRACTION	77	-	1
			Diner (THE MOVIE)	78	78	2
			pre-1975 ESQUIRE mags	79	43	2
			THE SEX PISTOLS	80	90	2
			Tacoma WA. HI!	81	-	1
			BIG DUMB GOLDENS LABS	82	-	1
			THE MAN WITH BOGART'S FACE"	83	-	1
			KETTLE POTATOE CHIPS	84	-	1
			mutual Masturbation	85	-	1
			FROZEN Italian Food	86	-	1
			R.E.M.	87	77	2
			Percy's ledge	88	-	1
			THE Stone Pony	89	-	1
			Premiere MAG.	90	-	1
			GARLIC PIZZA	91	-	1
			JOE ROBERTS	92	-	1
			Hoyd the BARBER	93	-	1
			BLACK HAIR	94	-	1
			BLUE Cheer	95	-	1
			THE GRILL CHEESE SANDWICH	96	91	7
			Eldorado Fins!	97	-	1
			UNDERDOG	98	98	7
			CAR 54 WHERE ARE YOU?	99	99	7
			RICE CAKES			
			HANDCUFFS FOR SEX			
			College BASKETBALL			
			Michigan Avenue			
			The String Tie			
			IOLY (70 CALORIES) LIGHT			
			1963 COUGARS			
			ETTA JAMES BUTT			
			FISH OIL PILLS			
			Getting Married			
			CHAINSAW Wa.			
			MOTEL # 6			
			Fish on Friday			
			Grace Kelly			
			RED VINES			
			COURTNEY COX! MICHAEL J. FOX			
			DAVE ALVIN			
			Personal Vibrators			
			OLD PERRY MASONS			
			THE 2 AIRLANES!			
			TOASTER HASHBROWNS			
			STAND ON IT			
			our Public SERVANTS			
			LEATHER JACKETS			
			A NIGHT IN JAIL!			
			The armadillo HEADQUARTERS			
			Having Babies			
			WHAT A CONCEPT FREE TIME			
			GOURMET Ketchup			
			Liberace			
			THE REPUBLICAN PARTY			
			Michael DOUGAN			
			KRAFT MACARONI & CHEESE			

Send your TOP 9 Picks!
mail to "Johnny 99" P.O. BOX 5122 SEATTLE 98115

NAME _____
CRIME _____ PENALTY _____

1 _____ 4 _____ 7 _____
2 _____ 5 _____ 8 _____
3 _____ 6 _____ 9 _____



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The World's Greatest Catalog

That's what Bruce fans are saying about our Super Boss Catalogs. We publish our catalogs at least quarterly and we guarantee you that we carry the largest and best selection of Bruce Springsteen and related artist titles offered anywhere in the world! And as our customers can attest to, we offer incredibly speedy service, unmatched by other mail-order firms. We only carry authorized and official merchandise too so you can buy with the assurance that you're buying quality goods.

Our latest catalog lists over 30 different Springsteen books, and hundreds of 45s, 12 inchers and albums. We also run frequent one-of-a-kind auctions featuring some of the rarest Bruce collectibles in the world.

So if you're a collector of Bruce Springsteen or related-artist records and goods, this is the one catalog you won't want to be without. To get on our mailing list all you need to do is send $5 in the US and Canada ($8 overseas) to Catalog Requests, Backstreet Records. PO Box 51219, Seattle, WA 98115 and we'll put you on the list for a year. Or if you'd simply like to check out the latest catalog without getting on the computer list simply send $2 ($3 overseas) to Catalog Requests and we'll rush you the latest issue. We guarantee you'll find our catalogs and our service top-rate. What else would you expect from the World's Greatest Catalog?

AVAILABLE FOR A VERY LIMITED TIME:

The SuperSub!

Rosie, our rockin' computer, needs a new mate so we can better service our subscribers and customers. To raise money for that— and to respond to numerous requests from our readers—we're starting a new SuperSub program and making it available for a limited time. We're seeking the support of a few of our subscribers to become supporting members. It's not for everybody, but for those serious fanatics who make the Boss part of their daily life, we think it's just the answer to your Boss fix.

Many of our subscribers have asked for years if they could get the magazine first-class and in protective envelopes and they have offered to pay extra for these services. Because of the way magazines are produced, these services are very expensive and take lots of raw labor to process. But as part of our SuperSub program we're offering supporting subscribers these services and more. Adding up all the services we're offering one gets more than three times the cost of service. Because of the cost of international mail, the SuperSub can only be offered in the US.

A SuperSup entitles one to:

- **First-Class Subscription to Backstreets.** All issues of Backstreets will be mailed to you first-class the instant they come off the press. They will be mailed in protective mailing envelopes and quick and speedy delivery is guaranteed (Normally no first-class subscriptions are available).
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- **Exclusive Collectors-only Staff T-shirt.** Our SuperSubs will be supporting members of the magazine and as such we've printed up an absolutely gorgeous t-shirt exclusively for them that says "Backstreets Staff, 1987." This beautiful t-shirt will not be made available to the general public and will only be given to SuperSub members.
- **Automatic Personalized Xmas Cards.** Each year we'll ship these to show our thanks to you, along with a special "gift" each year.
- **Automatic renewal of your subscription.** You'll never need to worry about renewing again—All SuperSubs will be billed each year so continued uninterrupted service is guaranteed (Normally we can't bill for renewals).
- **A free personal classified ad in each issue.** All Super Subs will be allowed one free classified (20 word limit) in each issue of Backstreets (no "for sale" ads are included in this deal—only trades, pen pals and the like). This alone is worth over $40 a year.
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The price for all these services is $50 a year. That's a lot of money but we think the services more than make up for the cost. And if it means anything, you also will have the satisfaction of knowing you had something to do with finding Rosie a mate.

This is obviously not for everyone (of course, regular subscriptions are still available), but we think this service is tailor-made for the serious Bossaholic and will more than pay for itself in convenience and service. We can't transfer any current subscriber over to a SuperSub easily so there is no conversion but what we can do is if you sign up for SuperSub, we can turn the rest of your present normal subscription into a gift for anyone you ask (and send them a personalized card letting them know). Or you could continue to receive your regular sub until it runs out ensuring that you'll get two prized copies of every issue of Backstreets, (a few of the sold-out issues are already now worth more than the price of the SuperSub). We know this offer will appeal only to a few and only to US subscribers. We appreciate *all* our subscribers and all the support you've given us over the years.

To sign up for a SuperSub, send your check, money order or credit card info, along with your name, address and phone number and your t-shirt size (M, L or XL) and we'll start you off ASAP by sending your "staff" shirt, the SuperSub packet and the unlisted phone number to the Boss Hotline.

Send to SuperSubs, Backstreets Subscriber Services, PO Box 51225, Seattle, WA 98115. And say Rosie sent ya. If you're a current normal subscriber also enclose your mailing label and let us know if you'd like us to continue your present subscription or give it as a gift to someone else.

Off the wall